Women Who Work

By GRACE HUTCHINS
Labor Research Association

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What is happening to working women in the United States today? Where do they work, and how much do they earn? What are their conditions in factories and on farms? How do they care for their families? What is the status of Negro women? What role are women playing in trade unions, in peace and other activities?

Grace Hutchins, author of a widely read study of women in the mid 1930's, answers these questions with a wealth of up-to-the-minute detail. She draws heavily upon official government sources, in particular the reports of the 1950 Census. She deals with the key question of "equal pay for equal work" and discusses seniority, speed-up, compensation, and various forms of job discrimination. Other sections analyze the "Equal Rights" Amendment and take up health and child care.

The second part of the book shows how women are actively working to improve their conditions. It describes their activities in trade unions, auxiliaries, and other organizations and their part in the struggle for fair employment practices, and tells how the unity of Negro and white women has brought a number of victories. The final section pictures the leading role of women today in the fight for world peace.

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Part I. ON THE JOB AND AT HOME

Carrying a Double Load

The time is 8 A.M. in any industrial city of this country.

A woman is hurrying along the street, almost dragging with her a three-year-old boy, too small to walk so fast. But what can the harassed mother do? She must leave the child at the day nursery and still get to her job on time. Not later than 6 P.M. she must call for the boy and take him home.

But on the way home she must do her day's marketing and carry in the bundle of groceries before she can start preparing the evening meal. After supper, she must wash the dishes, bathe the child, and put him to bed. If there are older children, they may help a little with the dishes before sitting down to do their homework.

If the husband has an understanding of the working woman's double burden in our society, he may wash the dishes or help with the children. If he has not, he will probably put his tired feet up on a chair and open the evening newspaper or listen to the radio.

The mother is lucky if she can finish the housework by 10 P.M. and get to bed. She must be up before 6 A.M. to get the breakfast, dress the three-year-old, clean up, and start for her job again, via the day nursery.

She works an 80-hour week, the economists say. But if the working mother can complete the week's tasks in 80 hours, she is lucky. Ask any woman who carries this double burden how many hours a week she works. She will calculate and then probably answer: "Oh, it is more than 80 hours in all. Nearer 90, I would say, because on Saturdays and Sundays I have all the week's wash and the cleaning to do, plus the regular meals to get, of course."

This is the "double burden" that countless numbers of unknown

heroines in this country must carry day after day. And out of the slender family income the mother must pay for the day nursery care for her child. Charges may range from $1.25 a week in a "public" nursery up to as high as $15.50 a week in some that are run by settlement houses.

The fees are usually on a sliding scale, depending upon what the agency thinks is the mother's "ability to pay." At best, this is a substantial slice out of a wage earner's take-home pay which must cover all the necessities of life—rent, clothes, meat, milk, bread, vegetables, and other foods.

These day nurseries or nursery schools for the children from three to six are too few and too expensive to meet the needs of working mothers. If the nursery is too far from her home or too far from her place of work, the mother must hurry lest she be late on her job. Such a rush is bad for her health and bad for the child, for no little child should be hurried or made to walk faster than his short legs can easily carry him.

But worst of all is the situation when a child is ill. Unless there is someone else to care for the child at home, the mother must stay away from her job. This problem was recognized at a conference of women workers in Chicago in January, 1952, called by the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America. At the Phoenix Metal Cap Local 190, the company tried to fire a number of women workers on a charge of "absenteeism." The shop delegate reported:

"They would have robbed women of all their rights in the shop, and of unemployment compensation—but we proved that most of the absenteeism had come when women were forced to stay home with sick children, and got them reinstated."[1]

To meet some of the difficulties faced by working mothers, this conference urged that a trade union should give special attention to the married woman's problems growing out of her family responsibility. By adjusting shifts and by seeing that these women are not penalized for necessary absences, the union can help to keep them on the job. The UE conference also urged a campaign for such government-financed child-care centers for working mothers as were provided in World War II. These centers should be conveniently available in every industrial community—close to the plants where women work.

"Latchkey" Children

Not only cities but smaller industrial communities as well need child care centers where overburdened working class mothers can leave their children for the day.

When there are no day-care centers and the mothers must go out to work, the children are bound to be neglected. "Latchkey" children they are often called, because the key to the family's apartment is hung around the child's neck, so he won't lose it. He comes back to the empty apartment or stays out on the streets. In either case he lacks the attention and the care that he needs.

But day-care centers usually get the reluctant support of reactionary authorities only under the stress of wartime emergencies. During World War II the need was recognized and centers were provided under the Lanham Act with federal aid for war industry areas.

But when the war was over and federal funds were withdrawn, the public day-care system disappeared. In New York, an industrial state where the need was especially acute, the state program had provided $2.5 million for centers for the children of mothers in war work. But this program was killed in September, 1947, over the angry protests of many mothers who said that war or no war they had no alternative but to work.

A few day centers left in New York City in postwar years have been financed by the city and operated under the jurisdiction of the Welfare Department. But mothers would prefer to keep their self-respect and support the family without any aspect of "relief." In the winter of 1951-52 a measure was introduced in the New York state legislature to provide $3 million for the revival of state-aided day-care centers for children of working mothers. It was designed primarily to enable mothers to work in mobilization industries.

This measure had the support of all organized labor, of parent-teacher associations, and of various women's organizations. The Women's Trade Union League urged its passage with the statement: "State-aided day-care centers where the children of women who must work can be properly cared for during working hours are a necessity

for growth and health of our children, for the morale and efficiency of working mothers. This bill has the approval of all organized labor."

But the bill was defeated. While billions were going for war preparations, the state legislators considered that $3 million was too much to spend for this aspect of child welfare.

A well-rounded program for child-care facilities in a community is a preventive service that keeps families together and off relief rolls. Such a program provides nursery care for children from three to five as part of the education of children in this age group. In communities without proper recreational facilities, after-school planning for the older child is equally important. After-school activities can be provided in public school buildings.

If there is no such planned care for the children of mothers who must work, then family life is often broken up and the future welfare of the youth is threatened. But indignation at the lack of such centers is not enough. To obtain them for a community, action is imperative.

Why They Work

How many of the 18,128,000 women now on paid jobs away from their homes are working mothers, faced with the particular problems we have described? In 1950, a quarter of all working women—about 4,500,000 mothers—had children under 18, and 1,700,000 of these mothers had youngsters under school age.

From one-tenth to two-fifths of the women covered in a recent, representative government survey have children as dependents.[2] This survey shows that at least four million working mothers (and probably many more) in this country today are supporting or helping to support their children. Half to nearly two-thirds of all women workers support or partly support dependents in addition to supporting themselves, the report reveals.

Union groups in which the studies were made were the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks (AFL); Communications Workers of America (CIO); Hotel & Restaurant Employees (AFL); International Association of Machinists (independent when studied); International Ladies

Garment Workers' Union (AFL); Textile Workers Union of America (CIO); and Women's Trade Union League of America.

This survey is said to be the first comprehensive study ever made of the dependents supported by women employed in the production and service industries. Most working women live with their families, the Bureau reports. But even among those who live alone, from one-fourth to one-third contribute to the support of others.[3]

This new study demolishes once and for all the ancient myth that women work for "pin money" and do not really need the jobs they hold. The facts provide a strong argument for equal pay. The study proves that sex differentials in wages, still existing in all industries as we shall show, cannot be justified and should be abolished.

Here are actual examples from the Bureau's study showing the burden carried by individual women workers:

A 34-year-old woman in an east coast city supports her baby and sends money regularly to her mother. She is a telephone worker. "By the time I pay my bills each week," she said, "sometimes I don't have enough for groceries. . . . If my friends didn't give me and my baby clothes, we'd go ragged."

A southern textile mill worker under 30 years of age supports herself and two children completely and her mother partially. I'm "the only one working," she says.

A married woman over 40 has been working for more than 10 years, supporting her ill husband. "I had intended working for two years at the time we married," she says.

A waitress in the midwest supports herself, her child, and her 67-year-old mother. She is 40 and has worked at least 20 years. The family has no income but her earnings.

"Sister was left with a family of seven," writes a west coast woman railroad worker who supports herself, her sister, and the children.

An Ohio hotel worker over 65 is the sole support of herself and her 75-year-old husband. "When I was laid off last June," she writes, "I could not find work because I reached 65. I asked for social security. They could give me $22.69 a month. I have to pay $32 a month rent.... I was idle for three months, and was called back at my present job. Thank God."[4]

These are a few of the 18,708,000 women who in March, 1952,

were counted as being in the labor force in this country. The figures reveal a marked increase in the proportion (30.4 percent) of women in the total labor force, as compared with the 22 percent they formed in 1930.

Of the total, 18,128,000 were employed, 672,000 of them in agriculture and the others in non-agricultural industries. Counted as being in the labor force but unemployed were 580,000 others.

About a third of all the 57.5 million women (14 years and over) in the U.S. population go out to work, the Bureau of the Census reports. The proportion of those who are in the labor force rose from 22 percent in 1930 to 32 percent in March, 1952.

Married women during the decade 1940-50 came into the labor force in greater numbers than ever before. The 1940 Census showed about 36 percent of all women in the labor force were married, 49 percent were single, and 15 percent were widowed or divorced.

But by 1950, more than half (52 percent) of the 18 million women were married, 16 percent were widowed or divorced, and only 32 percent were single.[5]

Living costs and taxes have risen, especially during the recent U.S. drive for war preparations. In most families the take-home pay of one wage earner is not enough to meet even the minimum standard of living, to say nothing of the so-called "American" standard. The mother takes a job if she can possibly hold it down while also running a home and raising a family.

With typical male superiority *Business Week* comments on the idea of a working wife: "Under this setup, marriages tend to become more equalitarian, with the wife helping earn the income while the husband lends a hand with the dishes. This creeping change is becoming a part of the U.S. way of life."

"Lending a hand with the dishes" is scarcely comparable to the working wife's job.

Husband-and-wife families, with the husband as head of the family, numbered 34,556,000 at the time of the 1950 Census. In nearly eight million (23 percent) of these families the wife was in the paid labor force. For these families the total income averaged $4,003, compared with an average of $3,315 for families in which the wife was not in the labor force.

"It is evident," the Women's Bureau commented, "that the wife's labor force activity is directly influenced by the inadequacy of the husband's income. This influence is particularly marked in urban areas, where the proportion of working wives declined from about one-third of those whose husbands had incomes under $3,000 to about one-tenth of those whose husbands had incomes of $6,000 or more."[6]

What Kind of Jobs

Some 5,288,000 women, or 29 percent of all working women, were employed in January, 1952, in clerical work, the Bureau of the Census reported.

This very large proportion of clerical workers represents one of the major changes in women's employment in the last two decades. At the time of the 1930 Census, only 1,987,000 or 18.5 percent of all women workers were on clerical jobs. The number of women clerical workers has thus increased by more than 160 percent and the proportion they represent (of all working women) has grown from less than one-fifth to almost one-third.

Here are the figures showing the occupations of 18,246,000 women:

EMPLOYED WOMEN, JANUARY, 1952

Major Occupation Group	*Number*	*Percent Distribution*
Total employed	18,246,000	100.0
Clerical and kindred workers	5,288,000	29.0
Operatives and kindred workers	3,526,000	19.3
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	2,140,000	11.7
Service workers, except private household	2,034,000	11.1
Private household workers	1,724,000	9.4
Sales workers	1,368,000	7.5
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm	998,000	5.5
Farm laborers and foremen	636,000	3.5
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	258,000	1.4
Farmers and farm managers	190,000	1.0
Laborers, except farm and mine	84,000	0.5

Some 2,034,000 service workers, not in private households, include those who work in hotels, restaurants, and beauty shops. Domestic workers in private households number about 1,724,000, less than one in ten of the total number of women employed. Together these two groups of "service workers" total nearly 3,760,000 or about one-fifth of all working women. This is a smaller proportion than the 29.6 percent of all women workers who in 1930 were in domestic and personal service.

These numbers indicate that fewer women are on domestic and service jobs, while many more are now working in offices and on similar jobs. Over 1,300,000 are sales workers in stores. Only 190,000 or one percent of all are farmers and farm managers, but 636,000 are grouped as farm laborers "and foremen."

The 3,526,000 "operatives and kindred workers" are those who work in factories—about one-fifth of all employed women. This is nearly double the 1,886,000 who were on factory jobs twenty years ago at the time of the 1930 Census.

During World War II (1941-45) women were employed in great numbers in most war production, including aircraft, munitions, automobile, electrical, and other industries. With the stepped-up war preparations of the past two years, they have come back into these industries, even taking what are usually known as "men's jobs." At the Benicia Arsenal in the San Francisco Bay area, for example, women are said to form about 30 percent of the working force. They "are filling 'men's' jobs with notable success," the Secretary of the Army reports through the civilian personnel division.

"Jobs on which the women perform best, the arsenal reports, are those of crane operator, lift truck operator, fire control inspector, parts requirements planner and talleyman." They are also working on mechanical and warehouse jobs, including welding, toolroom operation, and inspection. Increased use of power tools has "enabled the arsenal to make extensive use of women in 'heavy' operations."[7]

One of these women at the arsenal is a foreman in charge of a shop which operates three shifts. "She supervises 30 employees, most of whom are men."[8] Few women in this country get such foremen's jobs.

Those 2,140,000 grouped as "professional and technical" include not only teachers, physicians, and lawyers but also nurses in hospitals. But

the proportion working in the professions and technical positions has *declined* from one in seven in 1930 to about one in nine this year. This drop reflects in part the continued discrimination against women as physicians and lawyers.

Some 400,000 trained nurses are classified as professional workers, but theirs is a difficult position. Even the newly established shorter workday of eight hours in hospitals is a long pull for those who must be constantly on their feet. Wages have risen somewhat in recent years but are still lower than in other fields of work. Smaller private hospitals now pay nurses about $1 an hour or $40 for a 40-hour week.

Nurses who have joined the Hospital Employees Union (local of the United Public Workers) have been able to win wage increases up to $12 a day for an eight-hour day, and better conditions on the job. But in private hospitals nurses are eligible for retirement benefits under the Social Security Act only a voluntary basis, if the management and two-thirds of the workers vote to accept the social security system.

There is still an acute shortage of nurses in hospitals of all kinds, including veterans' hospitals, mental institutions, and in the public health services. This shortage may be traced directly to the difficulty of the nurse's job, usually involving hard physical labor and comparatively little recognition of professional status.

For women doctors the road winds uphill all the way. National health authorities report a critical shortage of more than 20,000 doctors in this country. Yet in the face of such need, more than half of the hospitals covered in a recent nation-wide survey said they had no resident positions open to women physicians. Only a handful of hospitals in the entire United States provide for women doctors full unlimited training and opportunity.

But when men physicians were asked for their frank opinions, more than eight out of ten said that "being male or female makes no difference in the practice of sound medicine."[9] Most medical schools recognize that fact and 95 percent of them now accept women medical students. But the lack of adequate opportunity to practice means that many girls who would like to enter the profession hesitate to start on the long road to a medical career.

The decline in the number of women in the professions reflects also the low salaries paid to teachers in many communities. Women

find they have difficulty in living on the pay that averaged in 1950-51 only $2,867 for elementary and high school teachers. For rural teachers the average in that year was only $2,200.[10] Many girls coming out of school and college would like to teach but decide not to enter a profession in which the salary scales are so low.

As spokesman for women in the professions and in business, the National Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs takes "the professional advancement of women as its special responsibility." Members of this organization oppose the discrimination against women in the professions and seek equal opportunity for the higher-paid positions in business.

In its recommendations to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in March, 1952, the Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs urged greater political and educational opportunities for women and the removal of all legal discrimination. It urged adoption of proposals for equal pay for men and women workers doing work of equal value. It asked the U.S. delegation to express "disappointment that governments have not seen fit to include a larger number of women in their delegations and that the Secretary General has not found it possible to appoint more women in top posts in the Secretariat" of the United Nations.

In carrying out its purposes, however, this Federation often adopts a policy that benefits only women of the middle class in opposition to the interests of wage earners. Traditionally conservative, these business and professional women recently went on record again in support of the so-called Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. (See pp. 35-38.)

On the Farms

City workers are prone to forget that some eight million women over 14 years of age live and work on farms in this country. And thousands of these farm women still work without benefit of electricity or running water.

It is hard for the city dweller to imagine what this means to the women who must "pack the water" from the well and do all the

cooking and washing for the household. Often the farmer's wife also cares for the chickens, and helps to milk the cows and feed the other livestock.

As late as 1945, the Department of Agriculture found that 6,500,000 farmhouses or 89 percent of all had no bathrooms or indoor toilets. About six million or 82 percent of all had no running water. Only one-third of all the farmhouses had electric lights.

The farmer's wife shares the poverty, the anxiety over mortgage debts, the heavy taxes that threaten the family with loss of the farm. She knows what it means to have little or no ready cash, to be unable to buy new clothes or go to a movie. Despite all the fancy advertisements in the women's magazines, the majority of farm women in the United States can only dream of such luxuries as electric washing machines, refrigerators, or vacuum cleaners.

"A thousand factories are ready to produce the articles farm women need to save their backs and muscles, to give them long-needed rest in the afternoon, a shorter work day, and clothing for their worthy pride and self-esteem.

"The only barrier now to a good life for farm women is a callous neglect for human welfare throughout our economic and social life in America. Then let farm women revolt, if necessary, to get the reasonable living conditions they need. The younger farm women are doing it already, in a futile personal way."[11]

In other words, the younger women are leaving the farms in great numbers, to find work in the cities. Despite the general increase of population in the United States during the past 40 years, the number of people on farms declined from 32 million in 1910 to 23.3 million in 1951, a drop of 37 percent.

"We don't have many young people in our neighborhood any more because there's no place for Junior these days." This was the report from many groups in Oklahoma in 1951, explaining the reason for a heavy loss in the farm population in the western Oklahoma wheat territory. New machinery has enlarged the per-man production so that fewer young helpers are needed on the farms.

"But I wonder where we are going to put the left-over farm youth," said a writer in the Oklahoma *Farmer-Stockman*.[12] The National Planning Association, representing big business and big agriculture, pro-

poses the removal of some two million low-income farm families, in order to make way for the larger, more productive farms.[13]

About 2,900,000 farm operators, or half of all in the United States, had money income (before taxes) of less than $1,900 each in 1950. The Federal Reserve Board, including farm operators in its 1951 annual survey of consumer finances, reports this low median but notes that farm families get "non-money income such as food produced and consumed on the farm."[14] In contrast to these low-income farm families is the little group of about 232,000 farm operators at the top of the income scale, who each had $7,500 or more in 1950.

Farm operators with less than $1,900 a year in money income are clearly of the low-income group. The women folk in these families are up against all the difficulties that go with low incomes, poor housing, long hours of backbreaking work, lack of conveniences, and constant worry about paying off the mortgage debt on the farm.

Not only farm operators' wives but the hired farm workers face greater difficulties than workers in other industries. The average workday for hired farm workers was 9½ hours in the spring of 1952.[15] This compares with a seven to eight-hour day for factory workers who are covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act. Farm workers' wages, when not including room and board, averaged only $34.75 a week in the spring of 1952. Unless agricultural wage earners work continuously for at least five or six months for one employer, they are not eligible for social security. They are usually excluded under state unemployment insurance laws.

The true story of Juanita Garcia of Brawley, California, illustrates what happens to thousands of farm families in this country. She told it in February, 1952, to the labor and management subcommittee of the U.S. Senate labor committee. This is the story in her own words:

"When I was a small kid my dad had a small farm but he lost it. All of us used to help him. But my dad got older and worn out with worries every day. Lots of us kids could not go to school very much. Our parents could not afford the expense. . . . Last year they fired some people from the shed. . . . There was a strike.

"I want to tell you about the strike. We got all the strikers out at 4:30 in the morning. The cops were on the streets escorting the nationals and 'wetbacks' to the fields. The cops had guns. The ranchers had guns

too. They took the 'wetbacks' in their brand new cars through our picket line. They took the nationals from the camps to break our strike. They had 5,000 scabs that were nationals.

"It looks like the big companies in agriculture are running the U.S. All of us local people went on strike. The whole valley was hungry because nobody worked at all. But the nationals kept working."[16]

Following the Crops

"To be ready to go to work when needed; to be gone when not needed."[17]

That is what is expected of migratory labor in agriculture in this country. Migratory farm workers numbered about one million in 1950. And almost one-third of all migratory workers are women.[18]

Living and working under almost intolerable conditions, these women in migratory families average only 68 days of employment in a year—50 days of farm work and 18 days on non-farm jobs. Men migratory workers average 116 days of work a year.

The migrants in California, widely known through John Steinbeck's book and movie, *The Grapes of Wrath,* follow the crop seasons from oranges in late April, through the pear harvest from July into September, then walnuts, olives, and another orange crop season in the autumn. There is usually no work at all from mid-January to late April. Then migratory workers are usually stranded, not eligible for unemployment insurance in the state, and often unable to get relief from local agencies.

On the Atlantic coast, migratory families move north from Florida where they start working citrus fruit, vegetables, and potatoes in winter and early spring. They follow the potato crops through North Carolina and Virginia to New Jersey and New York where they work also on fruit and vegetables. In early autumn they may get jobs on Maine potatoes.

In the midwest migratory workers follow the fruit and vegetable crops in south Texas, pick strawberries in Arkansas, sugar beets, cherries, and peaches in Michigan, cherries in Wisconsin, tomatoes in Indiana and Ohio, and go south for cotton picking in the autumn.

In such farm employment, earnings per day are below prevailing standards, however low those "standards" may be. The commission notes that this fact, in combination with the limited employment, explains why women and children have to work so extensively in both migratory and non-migratory farm labor families. Farm labor generally and migrants as well averaged only 55 cents an hour in 1950. This was only a little over a third but well below one-half the average hourly wage in manufacturing.

For a 10-hour day, the worker may earn as high as $4 to $7, and that is considered good pay.[19] For a whole year of effort, migratory workers averaged $514 in 1949, a typical postwar year. But the women averaged only $234 in the year while the men averaged $655. In answer to reports of "high wages" earned by these workers, the committee commented that perhaps "the earnings that were reported as those of a worker were actually earned by a family work unit with several members contributing."

In fact, the wages paid to the migrant laborers are so low that the entire family must work in the fields in order to sustain life. This is stated as the reason for so much child labor. More than a fifth of all migratory workers are between 14 and 17 years old—and this number does not include the younger children. This child labor does not mean the chores and vacation jobs that children perform on their family's farm. The commission makes clear:

"The child labor of which we speak is that to be seen in large acreages of peas, snap beans, or cotton where children, sometimes as young as 5 and 6 years, work along with adult members of the family at 'stoop' labor."[20]

Spokesmen for the National Child Labor Committee reported: "We have found from experience that we can't get rid of child labor so long as economic circumstances create the pressures which force children to work. . . .

"We found a long time ago it is not enough just simply to eliminate or outlaw child labor if there aren't any child-care centers where children can be cared for, if there aren't any schools for them to go to, if there aren't any recreational facilities that they can play constructively in."[21]

Living in Labor Camps

Migrant families on the job live in barracks, cabins, trailers, tents, rooming houses, auto-court cabins, shack houses and, on occasion, in run-down standard housing. When the units are grouped for two or more families, they are commonly called "camps."

The woman of the household, before and after her day's work in the fields, may perhaps find cooking facilities at the camp center, but often these are lacking. Then she must cook over an open fire or a portable oil stove if she has one. Running water is unusual. Toilets are usually privies in some central location.

Most camps are beyond the reach of medical and health facilities and usually no arrangements exist for regular visits of a nurse or physician. One physician told the commission:

"There are also evidences of merely ordinary starvation among many of these people. . . . A survey which I made and photographed, in the Mathis, Texas, labor camps, showed that 96 percent of the children in that camp had not consumed any milk whatsoever in the last six months. It also showed that 8 out of every ten adults had not eaten any meat in the last six months. . . . The reason given was that they could not afford it with the money they were making."[22]

Archbishop Robert Lucey of San Antonio, Texas, blamed the federal government for "actual starvation" among families of farm workers in southern Texas. He testified on February 5, 1952, before the Senate labor sub-committee investigating migratory labor. "The government doesn't bother to think of the workers," he said.[23]

In the San Joaquin Valley in California during the winter of 1949-50, at least 56 children died of starvation. County records called it "malnutrition." Unemployment hit the migrant workers early in the winter, after cotton-picking was over for the season. In one county, 11 infants died from malnutrition in November, 1949, and 28 more in December. Later, another 17 deaths from the same cause were recorded in the valley.

Most exploited of all are the migratory workers imported from Mexico and Puerto Rico. Many of the Mexicans and Puerto Ricans are kept under semi-slave conditions, unable to leave the job to which

they have been assigned. The lower wages they must accept tend to pull down the wages of other workers in the area. Bad as the housing is for all migrant labor, it is worst of all for the Negro people and for Americans of Mexican ancestry.

Where farm workers have organized a union and entered into collective bargaining with the employer, they have been able to improve the conditions under which they live and work. But even where there are union agreements covering farm employees, the collective bargaining coverage is limited and does not specifically cover the seasonal field labor.

The Agricultural Workers Union, District 5 (independent), stated in February, 1952, that "Farm workers, both migrant and non-migrant Negro, Puerto Rican, Mexican, and native white, face unbelievable problems that have been consistently played down by the press." This union outlined a program making the following demands on behalf of farm workers:

Efforts to be taken to set up a permanent Farm Labor Committee (under the Senate committee on labor). Rights to collective bargaining for all farm workers. Federal minimum wage of 75 cents an hour. Unemployment insurance and expanded coverage of old-age benefits. Federal laws to enforce both Puerto Rican and Mexican contracts affecting these nationals. Federal aid for health and school facilities. Federal grants for special housing for farm workers. Federal legislation to end racial discrimination which strikes farm workers the hardest blows.

Such a program, the union points out, can be taken up by other trade unions which have a special stake in protecting wage standards and working conditions in the areas where farm workers are employed.

Lacking Medical Care

Not only in migrant camps but in many other communities, too, there is no adequate medical care. And working class mothers are especially affected by the lack of such care for themselves and their children.

Barely one-fifth of the people in this rich country are able to afford all the medical care they need. In his basic report on "The Nation's

Health," Federal Security Administrator Oscar R. Ewing declared that four-fifths of all families cannot pay for adequate medical care.

In a coal miner's family in Wise County, Virginia, in the winter of 1952, the baby was ill. The doctor would not come to the miner's house because the mother could not pay. So the mother, Mrs. Richard Hazelwood, who hadn't any money or anything to give as security, took the sick baby in her arms and fought her way on foot over the rough, wind-swept mountain path to the hospital. But the baby died of pneumonia.

Physicians of the Wise County Medical Society upheld the doctor who had refused to come to the miner's home. One of them said: "It's a doctor's duty to question the financial status of a patient." But the baby died.

The United States boasts in the "Voice of America" broadcasts that it has the best living conditions in the world. Despite this bragging, says the Public Affairs Institute in a recent study, "Many thousands of infant deaths in the U.S. each year are needless."

For the most part, the Institute survey shows, "children are concentrated in low and moderate income families. Almost half of the children live in families with incomes of less than $3,000 a year (1949 figures). One-fourth are in families with incomes under $2,000."

Federal funds for education are now spread thinner and thinner so that while federal appropriations provided $13.50 per school year for each child in the program in 1947, federal funds now cover less than $9.[24]

Many children die needlessly because they are Negro and are therefore not admitted to some of the better hospitals. Of all the Negro people in this country, 75 percent live in the southeast—where health services are less adequate in general and are especially denied to Negroes.

After a survey of over 2,400 hospitals in 18 southern and border states, the Southern Conference Educational Fund reported in February, 1952, that in several states only a single hospital in the entire state will admit Negro patients.

Many hospitals have a policy of segregation in wards, so that "too many times a deserving patient is turned away because the bed space available is not in the ward designated for his color."

As a result of economic conditions, discrimination, and the lack of health services, the rates of disease and death are higher among the Negro people than among the white. Life expectancy is about 10 years shorter than that for whites, the general death rate is 16 percent higher. The tuberculosis death rate is three times as high among Negroes as among whites; the pneumonia death rate is twice as high.

In infant mortality, the national rate in 1949 was, for whites, 28.9 deaths per 1,000 live births; for Negroes 47.3. This meant that the infant death rates were about 63 percent higher for Negroes than for whites.[25]

"The maternal mortality rate for the non-white races in 1949 was 23.5 per 10,000 live births, a figure more than three times as high as the rate for the white race." The Public Health Service points out that since 1936, the maternal mortality rate for white women has declined faster than that for the Negro women, so there has been a widening in the racial differential in mortality risk associated with childbirth.

A general Jim Crow policy of "separate but equal" facilities has resulted in substandard hospital wards "which fail in every respect to meet the needs of Negro patients. . . . Almost all hospitals deny staff privileges to Negro doctors, who therefore cannot render hospital care to their own patients. . . . Public health services, welfare benefits, medical care, special institutions—all are less available to the Negro, as a result of discrimination and his economic conditions."[26]

Women Get Less Than Men

"In advertisements across the land, industry glorifies the American woman—in her gleaming GE kitchen, at her Westinghouse laundromat, before her Sylvania television set. Nothing is too good for her —unless she works for GE, or Westinghouse, or Sylvania or thousands of other corporations throughout the U.S.A.

"As an employee, regardless of her skill, she is rated lower than common labor. She is assigned to jobs which, according to government studies, involve greater physical strain and skill than many jobs done by men—but she is paid less than the underpaid sweeper, the least skilled man in the plant."[27]

This is the conclusion reached by the United Electrical Workers after an intensive study of wage discrimination against women workers in the electrical industries. This union has done more than any other organized labor body in this country to end such discrimination. Indeed, it was credited by the U.S. Women's Bureau with gaining equal pay for women in three electrical plants where UE had contracts:

"In each case, equal pay resulted from the union's activity and, in at least two of the plants, the company was initially opposed to equal pay."[28]

In every industry where women are employed, as we shall show, there is wage discrimination against women workers, and especially against Negro women workers. From this differential in women's rates, the companies are able to make extra profits that run into billions of dollars. These extra profits may be roughly calculated for such an industry group as manufacturing.

For men workers the median wage in factories in the year 1950 was $3,117, but for women workers only $1,832. (The median is the middle point, indicating that half earned less and half earned more, and may be roughly used as an average.) This is a difference of $1,285.[29]

The same 1950 Census report (on p. 37) shows 4,171,000 women on paid jobs in manufacturing industries (a larger number than those reported in January, 1952 as "operatives and kindred workers," see p. 13). *By paying the women wages that roughly averaged $1,285 less than the men workers' wages, the companies were thus able to save on 4,171,000 women a total of nearly $5.4 billion. Part, at least, of this stupendous amount may be counted as extra profits garnered by manufacturing companies from the employment of women at lower rates than men.*

In manufacturing alone, in the year 1950, profits (before taxes) totaled $23.2 billion.[30] The extra profits estimated as coming from the output of women at lower pay rates thus formed nearly a quarter (23 percent) of all manufacturing company profits.

For many years women's wages in manufacturing as a whole have averaged about 40 percent below men's. But the number of women employed in industry has risen sharply in the past 20 years, as we have seen. This rise in the number of women workers means that manufacturing companies have been able greatly to increase their extra

profits from the employment of women at lower wages than men.

In the electric lamp industry, where three-quarters of the workers are women doing production jobs but making less than common labor rate, companies make during the year $2,619 in profit per employee, compared to only $1,540 per employee in motor and generator plants where only one-fourth of the workers are women.[31]

The *UE News* thus reports on a special study of some 40,000 women employed by General Electric Company. Women doing the *same* job as men get paid 10 cents to 50 cents an hour less, the study shows, but the greatest exploitation exists on those jobs regarded by the Morgan company as exclusively "women's jobs."

Most of the GE women employees work on these jobs in lamp, radio, and television production, and in packing, light assembly, simple machine, and finishing operations. Men are not placed on these jobs, so the double standard of payment cannot be readily seen. But on the "women's jobs" in the electrical industry companies make a profit 70 percent greater than they make from the plants where few women are employed. Under this system a woman gives the company a higher rate of profit than a man.

Figures presented by the United Electrical Workers show "how an assembly job, held by women at a large GE plant has remained unchanged in its relation to a male sweeper's job even though the company now uses a single key sheet." On the women's assembly job, rated by the company at 480 points, the rate rose from 54.6 cents in 1941 to $1.34 in 1952, as a result of wage increases won by UE.

But the rate on the unskilled man sweeper's job, rated by the company at 440 points rose during the same period from 71.8 cents in 1941 to $1.43 in 1952. This "still left the women's production job, with requirements well above the sweeper's job, at a rate below sweeper."[32]

A spokesman for management in the electrical industry admitted to an investigator of the U.S. Women's Bureau in 1951: "I'd hate to be the one to have to sit across the bargaining table trying to justify differentials."[33]

Another company representative interviewed by the Bureau in this 1951 survey admitted that "in most electrical manufacturing plants it is the women who do the production work and 'make the money for the company.' "

After investigating eight companies with five to 25 years of experience with equal pay for women, the Women's Bureau concluded that these companies were paying the same rates to men and women doing exactly the same work "but all had in addition some jobs that were considered 'men's jobs' or 'women's jobs.' The 'women's jobs' were not only lower paid, as a rule, but there were indications that they were sometimes much underrated in comparison with 'men's jobs.' . . . Although some women in all eight companies were highly paid, relatively few of them held higher-level jobs."

Examples from a number of industries show that the Bureau's conclusion is a cautious understatement of the differential in pay between men and women. The differential varies according to the industry, but it is always there. New women workers coming into the GE plant at Schenectady, New York, for example, find the starting wage for *skilled* women is $1.29 an hour. But in the same plant, ***unskilled*** men workers on manual labor start at $1.39 an hour.

Men production workers in New York state factories earned an average of $77.61 a week in December, 1951, but women factory workers averaged only $47.06.[34] With this differential of $30.55 a week, women were getting 39 percent less than the men.

Here are the figures on women's earnings compared with men's in selected industries in New York State, in December, 1951:

Industry	*Average weekly earnings of*	
	Women.	*Men*
All manufacturing	$47.06	$77.61
Electrical machinery and equipment	52.85	83.31
Chemicals and allied products	49.98	74.11
Apparel and fabric products	46.38	80.06
Printing and publishing	45.24	91.11
Rubber products	47.69	76.01
Paper and allied products	45.76	71.34
Textile mill products	43.97	63.45
Food and kindred products	45.86	71.16
Tobacco manufactures	44.01	60.11
Leather and leather products	38.85	57.33
Laundries	35.97	not reported

As a result of union organization in the electrical machinery industry, both men's and women's weekly earnings, as shown above, are higher than the average. But the differential of about $30 a week is still there.

In cotton textiles, women constitute 40 percent of the national production force, but they earn from 6 cents to 9 cents less per hour than the men. This was shown in a special detailed study of wages in cotton textile mills issued in May, 1952, by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The bureau said that women were employed largely in less skilled jobs, but it admitted that they "are almost equal in number to men in weaving." Weaving requires certain higher skills.[35]

Men's wages are also pulled down by the lower rates prevailing for women in an industry such as textiles which employs a large number of women. In cotton mills the national average in March, 1952, was $1.19 an hour while the average for all factory production workers was $1.60 an hour.

It is an actual fact, the United Electrical Workers points out in its special study of wage discrimination, that the lower rates for women are being used by the companies to cut rates for men. At the Westinghouse plant in East Pittsburgh, "the company took jobs paying $1.45 to $1.48 an hour when done by men and put women on them for $1.30 to $1.38 an hour. . . . In GE's Locke Insulator plant in Baltimore, UE Local 120 is fighting an attempt by the company to lay off the 13 most senior men in a large department by putting in new machines to be run by women at below the common labor rate."[36]

Making Ends Meet

An average wage of $47 a week for women in New York State factories seems high to many in other areas where lack of union organization and the lower rates of pay for Negro workers tend to keep down the wages of all workers.

Markedly lower than the average wages in New York State are the rates paid to women in many power laundries and in department and ready-to-wear stores in many parts of the country. Many women get less than the standard 75-cent hourly minimum or $30 for a 40-hour

week, supposedly set under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Recent reports issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed women getting less than 75 cents an hour in laundries in most cities of the south and middle west. In certain cities of New England women's wages are below 75 cents an hour in at least one or two of the specific occupations in laundries. In stores, pay averages less than $30 a week for regular employees in many cities, not only in the south but also in Middle Atlantic states.

At the end of 1951, the dollar was buying only a little over half of what it had bought in 1939. Even according to the inadequate consumers' price index of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics the 1951 dollar was worth only 53 cents of the 1939 dollar. So when we translate the $47 a week average weekly earnings of a New York woman factory worker into 1939 dollars, we find that in pre-war purchasing power she really averages only $24.91.

Even if a working woman lives with her family, with the over-all economies that group living allows, she needed at least $45 a week or $2,340 a year, just for her own living expenses in 1951 in the industrial state of New York. This is admitted by the New York State Department of Labor.[37]

For a single working woman who lives alone and supports no dependents, the Heller Committee at the University of California has for many years priced a budget "to meet the minimum requirements for health and general welfare." The committee explains: "If a woman living alone receives a wage much below the cost of the items specified here, she cannot live a wholesome life in accordance with the standards of the community."[38]

When last priced, as of September, 1949, this Heller budget for a single working woman in San Francisco, called for $2,235.79 a year (including taxes) or about $43 a week. But in the past two years living costs in San Francisco have risen by about 13 percent, even by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' inadequate index of consumer prices, and income taxes have also risen to support the government's arms program. At prices as of December, 1951, the standard Heller budget for a single woman would call for $2,600 a year or about $50 a week (including taxes).

If a laundry worker earning $30 a week or less tried to meet the

Heller standard of living, she would have a deficit of about $20 a week or $1,000 a year.

These two budgets, of the New York State Department of Labor and the Heller Committee, are both for a woman without dependents. But comparatively few women workers have only themselves to support. Most working women have at least one dependent, and many have several, including either children or perhaps an invalid husband, mother, father, or some other relative.

"Why do women work?" the U.S. Women's Bureau asked some 9,000 trade union women in 1951 and reported the discovery: They work to earn a living for themselves and their dependents. For the majority of these women, the report showed, their wages must cover not only their own expenses, but partial and perhaps whole support of at least one other person.

About one out of every seven of these trade union women is the sole support of her family. Many of the women are paying all the expenses for three persons, and some for four or more. Of the married women the vast majority, 60 percent to 80 percent, work to contribute to the family's living expenses.

Making ends meet for many a woman then means earning enough to support not only herself but a family for which she is the sole breadwinner. To cover even the minimum family budget priced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, a family in this country needed about $4,000 a year in 1950.

In that year the woman earning $1,832 and trying to support a family of four even on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' minimum standard of living would have had a deficit of over $2,000! She would have had to use up any savings she might have, or borrow money, or else get help from relatives.

By October, 1951, this minimum family budget as priced by the government Bureau cost from $3,812 a year in New Orleans, Louisiana, up to $4,454 in Washington, D.C. Yet the living standard the budget represents is very modest. The wife must do all the cooking, cleaning, and laundry work without any help. She can serve the family meat "several times a week for dinner" (but not every day) and then only if the cheapest cuts are bought.

Factory production workers, including both men and women,

were earning an average of about $67 a week at the end of 1951, or $3,484 a year for a full year's work. This income is almost $400 less than the cost of maintaining a family in the lowest-cost city of New Orleans. It is nearly $1,000 a year less than the cost in Washington, D. C.

In most families, then, two breadwinners would be needed to meet even this minimum budget. Labor spokesmen point out that with yearly income for a full year's work far below even these meager standards, the best a family can do is to send the mother out to work and leave the children without adequate supervision or housekeeping.

Why a Double Seniority List?

One of the chief grievances of women workers in industry is that their names are kept on a seniority list separate from that for the men. Seniority was originally established in union working agreements in order to abolish discrimination and the old method of hand-picking certain workers for certain jobs involving promotion and higher pay. The young man at the foot of the seniority list may hope that as vacancies occur in higher-paid jobs, advancement will be granted according to his length of service on the employment rolls.

But when women find their names excluded from the regular list and kept in a special "women's seniority list" they recognize what this means: that a woman with 20 years seniority may be surpassed on the wage schedule by a young man just out of school. A woman may be "bumped" down, that is, dropped to a lower classification, just as the company is hiring a young fellow for a better paid man's job.

Seniority has become of increasing importance in union agreements. But the dual lists work against the union as a whole. At the Buick plant of GM in Flint, Michigan, in May, 1952, it was reported that women members of the United Automobile Workers (CIO), Local 599, with as much as 15 years' seniority were out in the street while men were replacing them. An article in the Flint *Weekly Review* explained management's motives for this special discrimination against women:

"When management excludes the women from all of Buick, which they will do if we let them, they plan to carry out their everlasting

campaign of speeding up wherever possible."

President Burt Moore of Local 599 said that the original mistake was union agreement years ago to the dual seniority lists. Now the union is trying to get management to agree to a single list, but so far without success. The union also is seeking to get preferential rehiring for the Buick women laid off at GM's AC Sparkplug plant.[39]

While dual seniority lists are kept, women may be hired for beginning jobs on an equal basis with men without getting equal consideration for promotion. Often they are not given equal training opportunities. Even if trained they are not given a chance at the better jobs. Women in the unions are now demanding equality in maintaining seniority rights for promotion.

The Fight for Equal Pay

No federal equal-pay law has yet been passed for private employment, but bills to provide equal pay for women on comparable work have been introduced in every Congress since the end of World War II. A federal statute was recommended by the Senate Labor Committee in 1950 on the ground that equal pay for women was "indispensable to full production."

In federal government employment, the classification act (1923) set up salary grades supposedly "without differentiation because of sex." Women government employees, however, find it extremely hard to advance to the higher-paid posts. Laws alone will not bring them equal opportunity.

But laws are useful in prohibiting the worst forms of discrimination. Already 13 states have equal-pay laws of varying strength: California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington. (New Jersey's new equal-pay-for-equal-work law went into effect on July 1, 1952.) The Montana equal-pay law applies specifically to teachers and other public employees. The Illinois and Michigan laws apply only to manufacturing.

A model state law prohibits payment of a lesser rate to women than to men for work of comparable character or work on comparable

operations. It prohibits the replacement of men by women at lower rates of pay, prohibits any discrimination against employees who cooperate in enforcement of the law. It also provides for payment of back wages owed to the women as the laws are improved.

A really good equal-pay law would cover all employment, private and public. It would *not* permit such loopholes as a differential because "the woman has had different training from that of the man," or because "the male worker occasionally performs different services," or "any other reasonable differential," which only suggest ways to evade the law.

A good equal-pay law provides for a rate of pay based on the content of the job and not on the sex of the worker. It affords greater wage and job security for men also, since under such a law the employer can no longer hire women for less money or replace men with women at lower rates.

Equal pay means more than simply equal pay for the *same* work, a principle which benefits only the women whose jobs are identical with those of men. Many more women work on jobs in which their skills, while not exactly the same as those on men's jobs, are definitely comparable with those of men. The principle of equal pay must be applied not only when the work of men and women is the same but also when it is comparable or when comparable skills are involved.

A step toward recognition of this principle was taken by the Wage Stabilization Board in November, 1951, when it adopted a resolution on equal pay. Under its provisions, the WSB is empowered to approve "increases in wages, salaries and other compensation, for comparable quality and quantity of work on the same or similar operations in the same establishment, without regard to sex, race, color or national origin." Trade unions should see that this resolution is really carried out in all their wage contracts.

A number of labor and women's organizations have testified in support of a federal women's equal-pay act. Here are some of the statements in favor of such a law:

National Women's Trade Union League: "The custom of paying lower rates to women . . . undermines the wages of all workers, reduces the income of the family, curtails consumer purchasing power."

National Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs:

"Inequality in the wage structure promotes price cutting, depresses the labor market, and thereby unbalances the whole economic system."

American Association of University Women: "One of the most serious and widespread discriminations suffered by women workers is the payment to them of lower wages or salaries than are paid to men for comparable work."

National Consumers League: "The application of the equal-pay principle is a workable and practical as well as an economically sound proposal."

General Federation of Women's Clubs: "Job opportunities in the postwar world must be open to men and women without discrimination on rates of pay because of sex."

League of Women Voters: "The principle of equal pay must be safeguarded if women are to have equal opportunity for development."

The Congress of Industrial Organizations at its 1951 convention in its resolution on women workers declared: "We shall continue to seek state and national laws for equal pay for equal work."

The American Federation of Labor, however, at its 1951 convention went on record as beliving "it unwise to seek federal legislation to accomplish what experience indicates is a matter for organization and contract between the workers and employers concerned." It suggested as a "more constructive approach" that all wage scales be negotiated "to provide the same pay for all doing the same or equal work without discrimination."

A few unions have insisted on equal-pay clauses in union contracts with employers. For example, the Hotel & Restaurant Employees (AFL) in California has signed union agreements with employers' associations representing hotels, restaurants, and clubs, with a clause reading: "The wage scales hereinafter set forth shall apply equally to male and female employees."

On the broader international front, the issue of equal pay for women has been placed before the United Nations in recent years by the World Federation of Trade Unions. The question is of major importance in every country as greater numbers of women workers are employed in industry. The United Nations Economic and Social Council has called for a convention on the political rights of women to vote

in all elections on equal terms with men. In helping to establish the political rights of women, the UN Commission on the Status of Women has already had some significant successes. More than 20 nations where only six years ago women were denied the right to vote have now granted them political rights. In Chile, for example, in the presidential elections of September 4, 1952, women voted for the first time on a national scale.

What of the "Equal Rights" Amendment?

For nearly 30 years a so-called Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution has been before the Senate and the House of Representatives. Why is it that such an amendment should be opposed by most of the large women's organizations and by all the great labor organizations, including their women's auxiliaries?

This misnamed proposal, as revised by the Senate Judiciary Committee, reads as follows: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress and the several States shall have power, within their respective jurisdictions, to enforce this article by appropriate legislation. This amendment shall take effect one year after the date of ratification."

In January, 1950, the amendment passed the U.S. Senate but only after a clause was included to safeguard all special legislation in behalf of women. The new clause read: "The provisions of this article shall not be construed to impair any rights, benefits, or exemptions now or hereafter conferred by law upon persons of the female sex." In the 82nd Congress, the proposal was again introduced and was reported favorably in May, 1951, by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

If the amendment should pass, it would mean that neither the federal government nor any state could ever pass a law applying to women and not to men, however urgent and necessary the law might be. The amendment would do away with all the state minimum wage laws now protecting women from notoriously low wages in a number of industries. It would wipe out the laws on shorter hours of work for women, the protection against night work in factories, all labor legis-

tion that protects women against especially dangerous occupations.

Other laws that would be automatically wiped off the statute books are those requiring certain sanitary facilities and other conditions of employment to safeguard women's health, such as seats for saleswomen in stores. These regulations are necessary for the well-being of women workers. But the proposed amendment would imperil all the hard-won legislation enacted to prevent the exploitation of women employed in industry.

Those who argue for the Equal Rights Amendment may say that all labor legislation affecting women should apply also to men. Undoubtedly, many of these laws should be made applicable to men, but as the Women's Trade Union League asks: "Until we can succeed in passing such laws for men, why should we destroy the legislative gains which women have achieved thus far?"

If it were true, as some may argue, that labor legislation for women had restricted their chance of getting jobs, then the number of women in industry would have declined in recent years. But on the contrary, during the past 30-year period during which minimum laws and other labor legislation for women have been passed, the number of women in paid jobs has steadily increased. The number has risen from 8.5 million in 1920 to 19.3 million in 1951, an increase of 127 percent. During those same 30 years, the total number of women in the population rose by only 46 percent. The proportion that women form in the total labor force rose from 20.5 percent in 1920 to 31.2 percent at the end of 1951.

Women who work in industry know that discrimination against them cannot be eliminated by one legal formula. Even if the Equal Rights Amendment were enacted, legislative action by the states would still be necessary to remove discrimination against women wherever it exists. The amendment would not be self-executing. This is recognized in the form of the amendment itself which empowers Congress and the several states, within their respective jurisdictions, to pass appropriate legislation for enforcement of the amendment.

In opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, Frances Perkins, then Secretary of Labor, testified in 1945 before the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives. She noted, as trade union representatives have pointed out for many years:

"It is a tribute to the power of a slogan in persuading people that the 'equal rights' proposal has gained whatever audience it has. . . . There has been no demand for an Equal Rights Amendment by the millions of working women who will be most immediately affected by its adoption. To the contrary, they stand united in opposition to the amendment. The most important and significant discriminations are the result of practices and traditions that are not touched by the amendment. The amendment will not put an end to prejudices against employment of women in industry or in the professions."

The Women's Trade Union League in opposing the amendment asks: "Are those opposed to this amendment against real equal rights for women? Of course not! We have always favored and worked for legislation that will secure full civil and political equality for women and men. However, we believe that the nation and the states must have power to make allowances for the physical and functional differences existing between the sexes. Only by recognizing and providing for such differences can real equality be established between men and women."

In opposition to the amendment are the deans and professors of 21 leading law schools and many eminent attorneys, including the general counsel for the American Federation of Labor and for the Congress of Industrial Organizations. They have united in a statement "On Legal Implications of Proposed Federal Equal Rights Amendment" which notes:

"If anything about this proposed amendment is clear, it is that it would transform every provision of law concerning women into a constitutional issue to be ultimately resolved by the Supreme Court of the United States. Every statutory and common law provision dealing with the manifold relations of women in society would be forced to run the gauntlet of attack on constitutional grounds. . . .

"The basic fallacy in the proposed amendment is that it attempts to deal with complicated and highly concrete problems arising out of a diversity of human relationships in terms of a single and simple abstraction. . . . That the proposed Equal Rights Amendment would open up an era of regrettable consequences for the legal status of women in this country is highly probable. That it would open up a period of extreme confusion in constitutional law is a certainty."

But the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution was still an issue in the 1952 presidential elections. Some 3,000 delegates at the biennial convention of the National Federation of Business & Professional Women, supporting this amendment, reminded the Democratic and Republican parties that it "has been a part of both parties' platforms for four years," and asked the candidates to urge its adoption.[40]

The Progressive Party in its 1952 platform called for equal pay for women and "removing all social and economic restrictions upon women, without jeopardizing existing protective legislation."

The Communist Party in its 1952 platform called unequivocally for "equal pay for equal work."

Speedup in Many Forms

The speedup program in many plants is continually driving the woman worker to produce more per hour for the same or for only a slightly higher wage—for the greater profit of the employer. It takes many forms but they all add up to heavier work loads.

In the fuel pump division of General Motors Corporation, at Flint, Michigan, for example, a total of 3,500 to 3,600 fuel pumps was considered a good day's output in 1948. But by early 1952, the company was demanding 5,500 fuel pumps a day—an increase of about 53 percent—to be put out by fewer workers. Three women used to burr the pump tops as they came out of the automatic Bodine machine. Now one burrer is required to clean up the pump tops and to do more than 10 tops a minute. The one woman is driven to exhaustion by the speedup.

In the textile industry, women workers in mill after mill have been compelled to accept work-load increases. At the Pepperell Manufacturing Company mills in Fall River, Massachusetts, 102 weavers walked out on strike on January 2, 1951, in protest against such an increase. They were members of the Textile Workers Union (CIO), demanding a better contract and protection against the new speedup.

The Pepperell company had called in an engineering firm specializing in the technique of making every minute of a worker's time count

for the company. Pepperell then seized upon its right under a clause in the union contract to set higher work loads, double in some cases. The clause in the TWUA's contract with the company provided for the union's collaboration with the mill-owners for speedup in production.

In mills of the big American Woolen Company with headquarters in Lawrence, Massachusetts, negotiations for a new union agreement broke down in March, 1952. The TWU area director, Arthur Brown, described at the time the increased work loads which the union had already helped to put into effect in the mills. Included were increases from six looms to nine in the weave room, from two "sides" to three and four on automatic spinning frames, from four "sides" to six and eight on hand spinning frames, from 50 to 100 percent in wool sorting.

When the work load was increased from two to three sides on the automatic spinning frames, a number of women fainted and the company brought in stretchers on each floor. A spinner described the speedup:

"The women can't keep up with the work. They just drop on the floor. . . . The frames run so fast you can't let go even to get a drink. . . . If we let the company give us more work this way, more people will go out of jobs."[41]

In a Detroit clothing shop, organized by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, skirt pressers, mostly Negro women, are paid three cents a skirt. Pants pressers get six cents a pair. "One can imagine," writes a clothing worker, "at what speed these Negro workers must work in order to make a decent living. Which means it is from the sweat, health and expense mostly of the Negro workers that profits are made" in this plant.

Such examples of the new speedup drive could be duplicated a thousand times over in the factories in this country. In many plants, even where the workers are organized in trade unions, production work is still on a regular piecework basis which, of course, encourages speedup.

But in many plants today the problem of speedup is more subtle and complex than the ordinary piecework of former years. By means of the stop watch and time studies, the employers and their efficiency engineers have evolved a system of incentives which drive the worker

to what is called a "voluntary" speedup. As one worker describes it: "They artificially create the conditions that compel workers to drink avidly at the poisoned wells of speedup."

By offering the incentive of a bonus for extra work, the company can sometimes obtain an increase of 100 percent in the work load. Later the voluntary feature is dropped and the worker who does not keep up the extra pace is fired. The company will say: "You gotta get the production or get laid off."

Instead of ordinary piecework, the employer may drive the worker by a plan of group bonuses or by a modernized piecework plan, including a set task plus bonus. Or he may require a time or unit output at piecework rates—so many pieces to be produced in an hour's time. Or he may introduce a time or unit system at variable rates. But there is no real difference between modernized piecework, task and bonus, and various other plans that express the task in terms of time per unit of work. All these incentives amount to speedup under which each worker's take-home pay depends on how much he produces.

By the term "work load" is meant the rate of doing work, the working speed, or the amount of work performed in a certain length of time. For the woman worker at the GM plant, quoted above, her work load has been increased. She is speeded up. She must perform the same motions more quickly, make more of them in the same time, and have less time to relax between motions. When the boss drives toward higher work loads, he is actually cutting the pay for a given amount of productive effort.

If the company is successful in its speedup drive, it is likely to lay off some of the workers formerly employed. Fewer employees produce more; the company saves on its labor costs, and rolls up a bigger profit. Speedup, then, means an increase in a worker's rate of output, accomplished by his (or her) working faster and more steadily, but the profits from this stepped-up production go to the employer. It may take any one of many forms. It may be a cut in bonuses to require faster work to get the former pay. Or piecework jobs may be re-rated as a result of some minor change, with the worker getting less per piece produced. In other cases, the number of workers in a team may be cut, while the same output is demanded. Or the company may try to move some of its operations to other plants or shops

where speedup is less under the union's control. Workers may be laid off in order to scare others into doing more work. Or those who resist the speedup may be dropped.

Sometimes the company tries to introduce tighter production schedules after conducting time studies or "visual checks." A good union demands that any time study must be with the knowledge of the worker involved and that all time studies for the investigation of a dispute shall be witnessed by a union representative.

In its broader aspects, the newer program of increased output per worker in postwar years has meant the greater exploitation of women workers for the higher profits of corporations. From the output of women who are paid less than men for similar work, as we have shown, companies garner correspondingly more in yearly profits.

Resisting Heavier Work Loads

Unions have found they can halt or at least control a company's speedup drive, provided resistance begins at once before the new work loads have been established. But acceptance of a new drive at the outset usually results in at least partial defeat for the union in the grievance procedures.

Rank-and-file union members recently beat off the speedup at the General Motors Cadillac plant in Detroit. The company demanded a higher production standard on the copper bumper job, but the workers insisted they could not meet such a stepped-up output. The United Automobile Workers representative timed the job and agreed that the workers could not make that production.

General Motors then dealt out one-day layoff slips to four workers as a threat to all. Still the workers would not yield. So the company changed the model and the workers put out the production they said they could do, but no more. Resistance to the speedup brought a victory for the union.

A somewhat similar victory was won by the United Rubber Workers in a plant where the company tried to increase the work load in one department by nearly 100 percent. The workers refused to accept the new schedules and were warned by the company they must produce the

additional load or be "disciplined." Resistance continued while the union grievance committee took up the issue with the management. Rank-and-file members meanwhile let it be known that they would all strike if any worker was fired. Management finally yielded and the original production schedules were maintained.

To protect the workers against additional speedup a union can bargain with the employer over the amount of work he shall obtain for the wage he pays. But any vague promise by the union that its members will "increase their productivity" may be used by the employer as an open door for a new "efficiency" program. The union must not link wages to a general productivity rise. A union can insist that some such clause as the following be included in its contract with the company:

"The wage scale specified in this contract shall be valid for the term of the agreement to compensate members of the bargaining unit for work loads now in effect. It is agreed between the parties that work loads shall not be increased nor shall new operations be set up with work loads higher than the average for the plant, without first negotiating regarding suitable additional compensation. The union reserves the right to refuse to discuss higher work loads where in its opinion the result may be a reduction in the number of available jobs."

As soon as such a clause is in effect, the union must of course be vigilant to see that it is enforced. It must watch to be sure the company does not try to demand greater output in a given time, does not increase the speed of machines or conveyor belts, does not try to cut the number in a team or crew, does not change the specifications on a job to require more work or increase the number of machines to be handled in what is known in textile mills as the "stretch-out."

Women workers especially, with the double burden that so many carry, are ready to resist the companies' demands for heavier work loads. One woman worker in a Boston clothing shop, organized by the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, describes it thus: "You really have to knock yourself out to make a decent wage."

Losing Health

Tired enough as it is, at the end of a day's work, the women say, without any additional speeding up on the job. Physicians of the union security plan, organized by the Distributive, Processing & Office Workers, have analyzed that feeling of tiredness and describe it thus:

"Most working people use up a great deal of energy every day at work and come home dead tired. The main cause for such fatigue is not so much the physical exertion as the monotony of the job, or the nervous tension going with speedup or with the pressure of a job routine imposed by management."

Work is necessary and it is also desirable, as these doctors point out: "Unfortunately, however, too often work activity is done under unsatisfactory working conditions, in speed-up tempo, or associated with a feeling of excessive nervous tension and insecurity. In such cases it will cause a dispiriting, unhealthy kind of fatigue."

Excessive fatigue may result from the daily work activity. But bad conditions on the job may also cause increased accident hazards and occupational diseases. Some industrial diseases, such as lead poisoning and benzol poisoning, affect women workers more acutely than men.

In a recent survey of women's working conditions in some 20 industries in Washington state, Federated Press found countless violations of state regulations. Health and safety hazards included the following:

"Hazardous atmospheric conditions range from lint which fills the air at a sleeping bag firm to carbon monoxide fumes from a jitney running back and forth in a wire rope factory.

"A requirement that the employer provide dry footing goes by the boards in virtually every Seattle cannery. Many women stand on cement floors all day, tending the belt lines on which fruit and vegetables pass endlessly by. A vague regulation against lifting 'excessive' weights is meaningless in the laundry and other industries."[42]

With the expansion of atomic energy, workers are increasingly exposed to radioactive materials. These can cause cancer, leukemia, serious burns, and death. Beryllium is used in the manufacture of neon lights, fluorescent lamps, and copper alloys, and in atomic energy

projects. It causes a fatal lung disease and skin ulcers, for which there is no known cure.

Silicosis and other diseases of the lung are caused by tobacco, cotton, tin dust, and many other dust particles which may penetrate the lungs and cause irritation if breathed over long periods of time. Methods of preventing such lung diseases include good ventilation, wetting of the dusts, and respirators, "all of which cost the employers money and are hence resisted. Ventilation is the most important."[43]

Heart disease, one of the main causes of death in this country, is now known to be caused to a considerable extent by conditions of work and life. In a recent analysis of the major causes of disability and death, Labor Research Association points out: "The greater strain of life today, and especially the more intensive exploitation and speedup in industry, have been implicated as among the important causes of heart disease, high blood pressure, increased accidents and nephritis. The increase in mental disease is to a large extent the result of strains and tensions arising from economic insecurity, as well as other tensions engendered by our society."

Health hazards are even greater for Negro women workers not only because they are paid less and suffer from worse conditions on the job and at home (see pp. 54-60). Their economic status, malnutrition, poorer housing, bad working conditions, unemployment, and lack of adequate health services all reflect the discrimination, segregation, and the ghetto system which spreads from the south to the whole land.

On matters of health and safety, a union health committee can investigate methods of preventing occupational hazards and see to it that safety rules are enforced. Many unions have carried out an extensive health program. By 1951, over seven million wage earners in this country were covered by some form of union health, welfare, or retirement benefit plans under collective bargaining agreements.[44]

Maternity benefits are of vital importance to working women in any health insurance plan and some unions have been able to gain such benefits in their collective bargaining agreements with the companies. Such benefits have also been demanded in the national program of the Progressive Party. But as yet there is no national health insurance plan in this country to enable all women workers to receive benefits before and after childbirth.

The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, introduced in the 80th and 81st Congresses (1948 and 1949) by Senators Murray, Wagner, and others and by Representative John D. Dingell (Dem., Mich.), did include maternity benefits among its provisions. Neither Congress took action on this measure which was opposed by a powerful lobby of reactionary physicians and patent medicine manufacturers representing the American Medical Association. This doctors' lobby has opposed all progressive legislation looking toward any national health insurance.

The United States indeed lags far behind other industrial countries in providing maternity leave, cash benefits, and medical care for working mothers. This fact is admitted by the U.S. Women's Bureau in a new report on maternity protection of employed women. This country ranks lower in legal benefits in this field than the 18 countries that ratified the International Labor Organization convention on this subject. Moreover it provides fewer maternity benefits than 34 other member nations of this organization, the study reveals.

Rhode Island is the only one of the four states having disability insurance laws that allows disability pay for pregnancy. Federal employees do not have any special maternity leave or benefits. No state reports any provision for maternity leave with pay for civil service employees. Health insurance, this report shows, is about 50 percent more expensive for women than for men. And where maternity benefits are included, the difference is still greater.[45]

Out of Work, Less Compensation

"If we hadn't accepted the increased load in the first place, this wouldn't be happening now," said a textile worker in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in February, 1952, as some 20,000 jobless walked the streets of the city that is dominated by the American Woolen Company.

Largely as a result of the speedup accepted in these mills during the past two years, about half the textile wage earners in Lawrence in early 1952 were unemployed, and nearly half of the jobless were women. By March, 1952, at least 7,000 in that center had already exhausted their unemployment insurance, and the number out of work was increasing at the rate of some 2,000 a week.

A spinner, making $54 a week after a lifetime in the mills, was supporting eight children because her husband had already been laid off.

A wool sorter commented on the general situation: "I've been working in the mills 44 years and I haven't got 44 cents saved up. . . . That company's got millions, but the more they make, the more they want."

These jobless workers are typical of many hundreds laid off in certain parts of the country, especially in the civilian consumer goods industries. The war economy that began with intervention in Korea in June, 1950, resulted in mass unemployment in some centers.

War production in 1950-52 kept plants humming in many centers where guns, ammunition, tanks, airplanes, and other war goods are manufactured. But by early 1952 mass unemployment had already affected certain areas of the United States. At least six percent of the labor force was out of work in January, 1952, in 23 areas surveyed by the U.S. Department of Labor. These centers involved mainly the textile, apparel, automobile, and coal-mining industries, the first three especially affecting thousands of women workers.

In New York City, the Municipal Civil Service Commission announced in May, 1952, that it had jobs open for cleaning and dusting in public buildings. The announcement brought 1,590 jobless women who stood or sat in the hallways and outside the Municipal Building for hours. Some of them waited throughout the night of May 26 to apply for what turned out to be only about 37 jobs. The first to arrive was a young mother who explained:

"If I'm not early I don't get the job. I'm going to sit right here on this stool I bought and wait and pray I get the job. I have a daughter, five, to support."[46]

Some of the women were single. Others needed the job, they said, because "we simply can't live on what my husband earns."

What happens when an older woman loses her job was described in an article in a union paper, "The Tragedy of Miss X." In the many years since her husband died she had worked as a waitress working for many years in Loeser's department store in Brooklyn, New York. But the department store went out of business early in 1952 and left its many workers jobless. It was especially tough for this older woman:

"She can work, she wants to work. But society only offers her an

inadequate Social Security pittance and a feeling of uselessness that will shorten her life."[47]

Even by the inadequate figures of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 670,000 women were jobless at the beginning of 1952—or about one-third of all the full-time unemployed counted by the government agency. Women who worked during World War II but are not now actively seeking jobs are not considered unemployed.

Also not counted by the Census as unemployed are workers who have been laid off "temporarily" or are waiting to start new jobs. Those who work part-time for a few hours a week, or even as little as one hour a week, are counted as "employed." The United Electrical Workers has for several years corrected these government figures as understating the true picture of unemployment in this country. UE reports indicate that at the beginning of 1952 the actual number of unemployed exceeded the Census figure by about 790,000—or a total of about 2,900,000. If about one-third of these were women, then the number of full-time jobless women in early 1952 actually totaled nearly one million.

But because women workers have earned less than men, they get less in unemployment compensation. Every state has a different unemployment insurance law, but all of them provide that the amount of benefit is determined by the wages that were earned. The average weekly benefit for the country as a whole under the state unemployment insurance laws is only $21.63.

In New York State, for example, where jobless benefits are among the highest paid by any state, the new 1952 rates start at $10 a week for those who have averaged less than $16 in weekly wages. They rise dollar by dollar to $26 a week for those who earned $45 (but less than $48) a week, and up to a maximum of $30 a week for those who have averaged $58 a week or more.

Very few women are in this top highest-paid group. Most of the women factory workers are in the middle group of those whose earnings average about $45 a week. The jobless woman factory worker in New York State thus gets about $26 a week on which to support herself and her dependents. The benefit lasts for 26 weeks, or half a year. Most of the women in non-manufacturing industries get less than this.

In Mississippi the jobless benefit averages only $15.63 a week. From that lowest amount, the averages rise to a high of $27.08 a week in Michigan. And these are averages for both men and women. If separate figures were available on benefits for women jobless, they would show a still lower average.

Unemployment in certain areas became so acute in early 1952 that an emergency bill was introduced in Congress in an effort to supplement compensation payments. Sponsored by Representative John D. Dingell the measure was backed by organized labor. It would authorize federal supplements to unemployment compensation payments when the unemployment is caused by cutbacks in civilian goods production as a result of the mobilization program. Since so much of the 1952 unemployment among women was caused by the reduction in output of civilian goods, this bill would especially benefit women workers.

In most states unemployment benefits last for only 26 weeks. When these benefit rights are exhausted, unless a suitable job has meanwhile become available, the worker must go "on relief." This involves submitting to a "means test," declaring herself a "pauper," and accepting the indignities that so often accompany the doling out of relief payments.

Women workers have often shown great courage in challenging the methods used by what are called "welfare" departments in cities and towns. Three girls, members of the Committee for Unemployed Youth in New York City, in 1950 were sent to prison for 30 days for "disorderly conduct" because they staged a sit-down strike at the city Welfare Department. They were demanding relief, which had been withheld, for a Negro girl, also a member of the committee. All three had jobs before going to prison but lost them as a result of the sentences.

In Olympia, Washington, in February, 1952, desperate mothers staged a demonstration at the state capitol building against the "regime of sickness and slow starvation" imposed on them by the relief administration. About 100 persons, Negro and white, women and children, took part in an all-night, anti-hunger vigil. When ordered to leave, many adopted a tactic of passive resistance and were forcibly carried out of the room by state troopers.

In both these actions, however, the protests were effective in bring-

ing some improvement in the administration of relief.

But neither the Truman Administration nor Congress has been interested in improving unemployment benefits or in establishing a unified federal system of jobless compensation. The bills introduced in Congress deal with increased appropriations for munitions, for military training and bigger army and navy and air force, for the arming of such areas as western Europe and southern Korea. No bills are pushed for health insurance, increased jobless benefits, or any complete system of social insurance.

Retiring on "Social Security"

"*Fairfield, Conn., April 6 (AP)*—Mrs. Clara Jersey, 69 years old, killed herself today in the grade school she was loath to leave after having taught there forty years, the medical examiner said. . . . Mrs. Jersey was distraught because she would have to retire when she reached her seventieth birthday."[48]

This, of course, is an extreme case. Few women workers choose to commit suicide on the verge of retirement. But most older working women dread those bleak years when the monthly income will be cut down to a third or perhaps only a quarter of what it was in their working years.

At the very time when they need more medical care, the additional comforts that make older age more tolerable, the extra cash to get about to see friends and relatives—just at that time, their entire standard of living must be drastically cut to fit the reduced budget that goes with "social security."

Because women earn less than men in their working years, their retirement benefits under the old-age Social Security Act are correspondingly less than men's. The *monthly* old-age benefit for women averaged $29.09 in 1951, or about $6.76 a week. This was 27 percent below the average monthly benefit for men which amounted to $39.97.[49]

Since the latest improvements in the law the minimum monthly benefit is $25. Women beneficiaries in 1951 represented one-third of the new eligibles under the revised law. Three-quarters (74 percent) of these women were awarded only the minimum amount (at that

time) of $20 a month, or $4.67 a week. All employed workers in industries covered by the Social Security Act pay 1½ percent of their wages for old-age insurance.

What happens when a woman retires on the minimum monthly benefit? A woman librarian retired on this pittance a few years ago. During her working life she had led fellow workers to demand pensions for librarians, but no pension system was put through until after she had retired.

When she was over seventy, she worked on a job that was covered by the Social Security Act, so she became eligible for a pension of about $20 a month. To supplement the tiny social security benefit, she applied for old-age assistance. The city department of welfare investigated all her affairs, found she owned some small savings bonds, and informed her she could not qualify for old-age assistance until these savings were used up.

So she used up the savings and was put on the list to receive monthly "assistance." This represented the difference between the minimum benefit under social security and the city budget for a retired woman worker. Between the two she received a little over $50 a month or $12 a week for all expenses—rent, food, clothing, and incidentals. The city "welfare" investigators watched closely to be sure she did not receive any gifts of money from friends or invitations to spend a few days in the country. If she did, the welfare department would forthwith deduct the money value of such perquisites from the monthly assistance check.

Of all the women 65 years and over in the U.S. population, 2.8 million, or almost half, had no money income of their own in 1950, the U.S. Bureau of the Census reported. "Of those receiving income, the amount was less than $500 for almost half. About 82 percent had incomes of less than $1,000."[50]

Government agencies have shown that most workers cannot save enough to buy annuities that will give them enough to live on in their later years. In a study of *Older Workers: Industrial Aspects of Aging,* the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics admitted:

"Very few industrial workers can save significant amounts during their working life, against old-age or similar contingencies. . . . Even during the prosperous year 1948, about one out of every three families

in the United States was unable to save anything and another fourth averaged savings of less than $200.

"In contrast, insurance actuaries state that a worker would require almost $15,000 in cash to be able to provide himself with a modest annuity of $100 per month, starting at age 65."[51]

Most retired workers are dependent on social security old-age benefits, meager as they are. The great majority could not possibly save the $15,000 estimated as necessary under private insurance plans to provide a modest annuity of $100 a month, starting at age 65.

The Social Security Administration admits that the benefits now paid under the revised act are inadequate to meet the needs of older persons. It recognizes that the cost of hospital care for persons on the old-age and survivors insurance is a "significant non-covered risk." It concludes:

"The old-age and survivors insurance benefit is not designed to meet large, unexpected, and unpredictable costs. For persons whose chief reliance for their daily needs must be placed on the benefit, a period of hospitalization may create catastrophic costs well beyond their means."[52]

Economic needs are the major part of the difficulty for most older workers. And the economic needs are closely related to the social aspects of their position. They are lonely partly because they do not have the money to get about to see people. It is unusual to find a government report admitting the plight of so many retired older workers:

"Hundreds of thousands of aged social insurance beneficiaries are living alone, often in ill health, unoccupied, and with no sense of purpose or hope for the future."

Part II. WHY WOMEN ORGANIZE

Unions and Older Workers

A good union can do much to improve conditions for its older members. The demand of some unions for equal pay for women during their working years is a basic part of any program for helping women who retire on social security. Since old-age benefits are related to work-life earnings, higher wages for women will bring higher pensions for their retirement.

The best pension plans are no substitute for wage increases. In recent collective bargaining many companies have granted the payment of pensions, as a cheaper program in order to avoid the cost of paying higher wages.

Most unions have accepted pension plans which are tied to social security benefits. Under such plans, the amount received from the government is to be deducted from the amount guaranteed by industry. If the company guarantees a pension of $100 a month, for example, as under the Ford Motor Company plan, the amount of the social security old-age benefit is deducted and the company pays the balance.

In two industries employing mostly men workers, two unions, the United Mine Workers and the Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union have established better agreements on pension payments. Under these agreements, the companies guarantee a pension of $100 a month *over and above* the social security old-age benefit. This means that a retired worker will get an additional $100 a month, irrespective of how much he gets under the Social Security Act. But so far as is now known, no union in a woman-employing industry has as yet won such substantial gains.

Some of the progressive unions argue that wage earners should not have to pay the social security taxes on their earnings. When a trade union attempts to provide for the security of its members in old age, it meanwhile deprives them of much-needed increases in take-home pay. Such union efforts are only delaying pressure on the government for more adequate social security laws, these progressive unionists point out. Under the present system young workers who can least afford it are contributing large amounts every year to a retirement fund which may not be sound in the unforeseeable future.

Compulsory retirement at the age of 65 works great hardship for many women workers who are physically vigorous and could continue working beyond that age. But many employers regard women as "old at 40" and it is almost impossible for a woman over 45 to get a new job in industry. In the broad age span 45 to 64 years, there were in 1951 10.5 million women not then employed.[53]

Women have a longer life expectancy than men, yet they have less opportunity for work in their older years. There are 116 women to every 100 men over 65 in the United States but women make up less than a fifth of the total labor force in the over-65 age group. In an article, "Retirement—Boon or Menace?" Kathryn Close indicates the discrimination against older women workers:

"That working women face an even greater prejudice against age than men is indicated by the frequent practice of setting 60 as a compulsory retirement age for women—with comparatively lower pensions —as against 65 for men, even though women on the whole live longer."[54]

Economic need alone would keep most men and women at work as long as is physically possible since "Retirement, even under an 'adequate' pension system, always involves a reduction in income."

Both the United Automobile Workers (CIO) and the Textile Workers Union (CIO) participate in joint labor-management committees to decide all cases involving compulsory retirement. Under a typical contract, an employee is eligible for a pension at 65 if she (or he) wishes to retire. From 65 to 68 the worker alone decides whether or not she will remain on the job. Between the ages of 68 and 72 she must apply each year for permission to continue working — a matter to be decided by the joint labor-management committee.

After 72, the management alone decides on the worker's eligibility to continue on the job.

But any true solution of the older worker's problem involves a much broader program. It would include adequate pensions and part-time work for those no longer able to carry a full-time job. Such a program would end the present restriction in the Social Security Act which prohibits benefit payments to persons between 65 and 75 who earn more than $75 a month.

A measure proposed in the revision of the Social Security Act in 1950 would have lowered the age at which retirement benefits become payable to 60 years for women as against the present 65 years. It would have made the social security benefits available to women five years earlier than at present. But this provision was not included in the 1950 amendments to the act.

Negro Women at Work

"Lifting as we climb," is the motto of the major Negro women's organization, the National Association of Colored Women. But life is "no crystal stair" for these courageous women, as Langston Hughes sang in his poem of a Negro mother to her son. "It's had tacks in it and splinters and boards torn up and places with no carpet on the floor—Bare!" But Negro women have not turned back or sat down on the steps.

Negro women are well organized, as we shall show, in associations of many different kinds. And some of their organizations aim especially to struggle against the discrimination and segregation to which the Negro people have for so many generations been subjected.

While not quite a third (31.8 percent) of all white women over 14 years were in the civilian labor force in 1950, nearly half (45.7 percent) of "non-white" (mostly Negro) women were in the labor force.* [55]

* The term "non-white" is used by the Bureau of the Census to include Negroes, Mexicans, Indians, and others. But the latest Census shows that over 96 percent of the "non-whites" are Negroes. We may thus use the data for non-whites as practically identical with the figures for Negroes.

The lower wages paid to Negro men mean that relatively more of the Negro wives and mothers must also go out to work in an effort to meet living costs for the family. But the Jim Crow policy of discrimination against Negro workers means that the women find it doubly hard to get any better jobs.

About 1,867,000 "non-white" women were on paid jobs in this country in 1950, the Census shows. But 1,117,000 or 59 percent of these women were in the domestic and personal services, mainly because they could not get other jobs. This number compares with the 1940 figure of 1,087,000 (69 percent of all) who were either household workers or in similar kind of work.[56] The chief gains made by Negro women in the decade would appear to be in professional and technical work (including nursing in hospitals), in clerical occupations, and as industrial operatives.

Here are the figures by major occupation group:

MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP OF EMPLOYED PERSONS, NEGRO WOMEN

	1950	*1940*
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	115,000	67,000
Farmers and farm managers	37,000	48,000
Managers, officials, etc. except farm	10,000	12,000
Clerical and kindred workers	74,000	15,000
Sales workers	24,000	10,000
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	19,000	2,600
Operatives and kindred workers	273,000	104,000
Private household workers	785,000	923,000
Service workers, except private	332,000	164,000
Farm laborers, except unpaid	75,000	72,000
Farm laborers, unpaid family workers	90,000	133,000
Laborers, except farm and mine	21,000	13,000
Occupation not reported	13,000	11,000
	1,867,000	1,574,000

The big increase, shown above, in the number of Negro women on clerical jobs looks like a sizable gain, but the number of white women clerical workers also increased. Only four percent of all Negro women

workers hold clerical positions, and it is well-known that the jobs they do hold are among the lowest-paid. Many, for example, are employed in "direct mail," notorious for its speedup and sweatshop conditions.

The small proportion of Negro women on clerical jobs becomes all the more significant in view of the expressed need for more secretarial workers. Spokesmen for a "national Secretaries Week" in early June, 1952, announced that "more than 30,000 new secretarial jobs open up every year. . . . The nation's 1,200 business schools are not graduating enough new secretaries to take care of the new jobs and fill the 250,000 vacancies that occur annually."[57]

The shortage of secretaries, employment records show, has increased tenfold since the "defense" program was started in 1950.

In factories, the number of Negro women has more than doubled, but only 273,000 or less than 15 percent of all Negro women workers are operatives in industry. Most of these are kept on the worst jobs. In textile mills and tobacco factories, for instance, they do the dusty, heavy work not usually done by white women, such as cleaning, packing and unpacking the goods, and stripping tobacco.

A good many Negro women, as shown in the figures above, changed during the decade from jobs as "private household workers" to other service jobs. But so did thousands of white women. As Victor Perlo puts it in his analysis of "Trends in the Economic Status of the Negro People": "Since this shift was even more pronounced in the case of white women, private household work remains more than ever a predominantly Negro occupation."[58] Probably an even larger number of Negro women were in service jobs than these official figures show. The Bureau of the Census has admitted that the 1950 census underestimated the labor force by about six percent.

The National Urban League looked over the job bias situation early in 1952 in "25 of the best-known industries in the nation," centered in 30 key industrial areas which "now hold 50 percent of all prime defense contracts." But the picture it saw was dark with discrimination against hiring Negroes, especially against hiring Negro women workers. The report showed:

"That Negro women were being excluded generally and that few men were included in the in-plant training courses." Discrimination

"follows a uniform pattern in plants located in northern and southern industrial centers," with a few Negroes being added to the maintenance and common labor groups. "The employment of Negroes in white-collar, administrative technical jobs in these expanding industries is practically unheard of."

The aircraft industry in the winter of 1952 was putting on men and women and training them. But "Negroes are conspicuously absent. . . . In the South and Southwest where new aircraft plants are being erected and activated, discriminatory hiring practices have all but excluded Negro workers."

In Columbus, Ohio, none of the 40 large plants employed Negro clerical or technical workers. The four that had training programs had enrolled no Negroes.

In Baltimore, Maryland, with large metal and aircraft plants, Negroes were "excluded from most production jobs and all technical and clerical jobs."

The National Urban League concluded: "In the majority of the nation's industrial centers," employment service officials declared "that employers are submitting discriminatory job orders, and they are powerless to do anything about them."

Largely as the result of such discrimination, there are more jobless Negro workers than white workers. In 1950, of all white women in the labor force, 4.9 percent were unemployed while of all Negro women in the labor force 7.8 percent were jobless. This was the annual average as revealed by the Census. In the words of a recent government report:

"As in past periods, unemployment rates for non-white workers in the first quarter of 1952 were substantially higher than for the white work force. About 6 percent of non-white workers were unemployed in the first quarter—twice the percentage of job-seekers among whites. This continuing differential is partly the result of a higher concentration of non-white workers in unskilled and seasonal occupations — where the incidence of unemployment tends to be well above the average for the labor force."[59]

Toward Fair Employment Practice

Negro workers are usually kept on the lowest-paid, dirtiest jobs. Regardless of seniority rights they are not generally upgraded to the more skilled occupations that are more desirable and better paid. Lower wage scales and worse conditions for the Negro workers mean that white workers' wages are also pulled down and their conditions made worse.

The Progressive Party in its 1952 platform came out unequivocally for "a Federal Fair Employment Practices law with effective enforcement powers to guarantee equality in job opportunities and training for the Negro people, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans and all other minorities." It also called for a federal anti-poll tax law and a federal anti-lynching law.

In its 1952 platform, the Communist Party calls "upon the American people to fight with all their strength against the danger of fascism, to resist every fascist measure, to defend every democratic right." It seeks "to restore the Bill of Rights" and calls for "a Federal compulsory FEPC."

Both the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations at their 1951 national conventions again passed resolutions calling for passage of a federal Fair Employment Practice Act, and the CIO made clear that it demanded also similar acts in those states and cities not now having such legislation. But the National Negro Labor Council, including representatives of AFL, CIO and independent unions, organized in October, 1951, declares that it is now time to move on from good resolutions to union action. This National Council and its local branches have made a good beginning in a drive for 100,000 new jobs for Negro workers.

In Los Angeles, California, for example, in a vigorous effort to get more jobs for colored women, the Negro Labor Council has taken as its slogan, "Jobs for Negro women in industry—not in the kitchens of the wealthy." It took up the problems of the thousands who were hired during World War II by Goodyear Rubber Company and by aircraft and other industrial plants, but who were dropped when the war was over.

Negro women who formerly worked in the Los Angeles post office charged that they were fired in 1950 because discrimination was practiced against them both as women and as Negroes. Some of these women had as many as seven years seniority and most of them had civil service status. But they were displaced by men who had no civil service standing.

If a white worker doesn't like the job or the pay, the employer says, in effect, I can get a Negro woman to take it for even less. He plays off one group of workers against another.

That Negro workers earn less is proved even by government reports. For the year 1949, latest for which the figures are given, half of all the non-white women workers in this rich America received less than $654 in wage or salary income. That was the "median" reported by the Bureau of the Census.[60] But the median wage or salary for white women workers was $1,615 for that year—147 percent more than the non-white median. In other words, non-white women earned only about 40 percent of what all women earned—low as that amount was.

Look at that figure of $654 or less for a whole year's work. It equals only $12.60 a week, or about 54.50 a month. Yet in 1949 half of all non-white women workers, over 14 years old, in this country earned less than that meager amount.

In the cautious words of a government report, the Census Bureau admits: "Marked differences were found in the distributions of white and non-white families and individuals by income levels. For the country as a whole, the median income of white families and individuals was $2,900, about twice that received by the non-white." This means that the median income of non-white families was only about half that of white families.

In about half the non-white families it took more than one wage-earner to bring in the family income. The Census Bureau adds: "Despite the fact that proportionately more of the non-white than of the white population was engaged in paid work, the average income of non-white farm families was about half that of white farm families."

Effect of the lower wages for Negroes in pulling down the general wage scale is shown in comparing the average hourly earnings in southern states with those in northern states. At the end of 1951, production workers in manufacturing in Mississippi averaged $1.04 an hour

while factory production workers in Michigan averaged $1.89 an hour. In Georgia production workers averaged $1.17; in Illinois $1.67. For a 40-hour week, this southern differential ranges from $20 up to $34 a week.

Because of the lower wages paid to Negro and white workers in the south and the comparative weakness of trade unionism in southern states, many companies have closed down their northern plants and moved to the south. Textile mills started this southward move after World War I. Chemical and munitions plants and extensive atom-bomb establishments have been set up in recent years in southern states.

Any disunity between Negro and white workers gives the employers a greater advantage in bargaining with one group against another to maintain lower wages. But when white workers understand what this means and demand for Negro fellow workers equal pay, upgrading, and seniority rights, the white workers are actually fighting for their own rights as well.

Organizing for Equal Rights

In carrying out its nation-wide drive in 1952 for 100,000 new jobs for Negro workers in areas previously barred to them, the National Negro Labor Council put special emphasis on jobs for Negro women, since women had been most affected by postwar layoffs. The organization has recently won some local victories. In the clerical field, for example, which had been closed to Negro women office workers, the Ford Motor Company yielded in February, 1952, with the following promise:

"All applicants who apply at the Ford Rotunda Building in Dearborn [Michigan] in response to advertisements placed by the Ford Motor Co. in the Sunday papers for stenographers, typists and comptometer operators, will be hired without discrimination as to race."

This promise represented a major breakthrough in the office hiring policies of a big automobile company.

Another victory occurred in New York City where the United Packinghouse Workers took up the case of 12 Negro women, turned

down when they applied for jobs in the packinghouse industry. The union led a struggle in 1951-52 which broke through the Jim Crow policy of the Hygrade Food Products Corporation. The company agreed to hire the Negro women as soon as it had openings for jobs at the skills for which the women had applied. And the women were to receive retroactive pay when their jobs began.

In Orange, New Jersey, strong action by Local 407 of the United Electrical Workers forced the Edison Company to rehire a skilled Negro worker, Mrs. Lucille Webster, with eight months' back pay. Employed by the company for eight years, Mrs. Webster had been suddenly fired from her job in the instrument division on grounds that her work was bad. After an arbitration hearing, however, she was reinstated. When the union staged several stoppages and took a formal strike vote, the company backed down and also rehired the union shop chairman who had been fired for supporting the Negro worker.

Leaders of the National Negro Labor Council—William R. Hood, president, and Coleman A. Young, executive secretary—have pressed for insertion of the model fair employment practice clause (FEPC) in all union contracts. The model clause says:

"The company agrees that it will not discriminate in the hiring of employees, or in their training, upgrading, promotion, transfer, layoffs, discipline, discharge, or otherwise, because of race, creed, national origin, political affiliation, sex, or marital status."

The NNLC especially stresses the fight for upgrading of Negro workers, job-training for both men and women, and elimination of lily-white departments in industrial plants. In urging a record turnout of Negro voters in the south in the 1952 elections, the NNLC said this would be "the answer to the terroristic genocidal murder of Mr. and Mrs. Harry T. Moore in Mims, Florida."

Harry T. Moore, Florida state leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was killed outright when a bomb planted under the floorboards of the Moores' bedroom exploded on Christmas night, 1951. His wife, Mrs. Harriet Moore, 49-year-old schoolteacher, died on January 3, 1952, from injuries received in the bombing. The Moores are survived by two young daughters.

This bombing climaxed a long series of Ku Klux Klan terrorist actions in Florida, directed against Negroes, Jews, and Catholics.

Moore was killed because he had come to the defense of other Negroes who died. He had dared to challenge the sheriff's killing of the defenseless handcuffed Negro youth, Samuel Shepherd.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is one of the older organizations for the defense of the rights of colored people, both men and women. Organizations for Negro women alone have become a strong force in this country in the struggle for their rights as American citizens. One of the earliest of these was the National League of Colored Women which combined with the National Federation of Colored Women in 1896 to form the National Association of Colored Women.

Negro women took the lead in 1951 in the series of bitter struggles to save the lives of the Martinsville Seven, Willie McGee, and the Trenton Six. Only the Trenton Six were spared in these hideous frame-up executions, but out of the civil rights fight came new Negro women leaders, among them Mrs. Rosalie McGee, Mrs. Bessie Mitchell, Mrs. Amy Mallard, and Mrs. Josephine Grayson.

When Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, one of the leading Negro educators in the United States, was invited in April, 1952, to speak at the junior high school in Englewood, New Jersey, her scheduled address was cancelled by the Board of Education. Dr. Bethune is president of the National Council of Negro Women and president-emeritus of Bethune-Cookman College in Florida. The action against her speaking was protested by the National Association of Colored Women, by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and by other organizations all over the country. As a result, she spoke later at the school from which she had previously been barred.

Among the newer organizations of Negro women, the Sojourners for Truth and Justice has already established itself as a leading association of forward-looking women. A group of 14 women leaders in September, 1951, issued a call for a "sojourn for truth and justice" in Washington, D. C., at the house where Frederick Douglass had lived. Over 132 Negro women from 15 states responded. They met to protest the government's frame-up attempt to imprison the great Negro scholar and author, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois—an attempt that was defeated.

The proclamation of the Sojourners for Truth and Justice declares:

"We call upon our government to prove its loyalty to its 15 million Negro citizens by the passage of an anti-lynch law that provides the death penalty for the lynchers and indemnity for widows and orphans of the lynch victims . . . the passage of an anti-poll tax law and representation of the Negro people in every phase of the political life of our nation."

The STJ called further for the passage of a fair employment practice law "to insure our right to earn our bread in dignity and with equal opportunity in all fields of endeavor." It demanded the immediate freedom of Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram, sentenced to life imprisonment "for defending the honor of all womanhood, as the first step in ending the indignities heaped upon Negro women everywhere in our land."

From its national headquarters at 61 West 125th St., New York City 27, the Sojourners for Truth and Justice invite other Negro women to become members and form chapters of the organization in their blocks, neighborhoods, and boroughs. In the spirit of the great nineteenth century Negro women leaders, Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman, the Sojourners declare:

"We shall not be trampled upon any longer. We shall resist all attempts to muffle our voices or shorten our strides toward freedom. To this end we shall strive to unite all Negro women, and extend our united hands to every freedom- and peace-loving individual in our nation who wants to march together with us down freedom road."

Among the prominent leaders of the STJ are such women as Mrs. Charlotta Bass, former publisher and editor of the *California Eagle.* She is the STJ national chairman and 1952 candidate of the Progressive Party for vice-president of the United States. Others are Mrs. Pauline Taylor of Youngstown, Ohio, and Mrs. Jackie Clark of California; Mrs. Louise Thompson Patterson, Mrs. Dorothy Hunton, and Mrs. Eslanda Goode Robeson of New York. These women are leaders also in the movement for world peace. The STJ calls for:

"The coming together of our government with other great nations to work out the guarantees for permanent world peace, so that we, along with all other women everywhere, may live and rear our children in a free, secure, and peaceful world."

Power of Unity

What can be accomplished when Negro and white families work together to break down racism was dramatically illustrated recently in a New York City housing project. As a background to this success story it is necessary to remember that the discrimination against Negroes in housing and in residence areas is still widespread and bitter.

Negro families are segregated in certain areas of cities and towns, charged higher rents than white tenants for worse accommodations, and terrorized if they try to move into better quarters in a white area. The race riot in Cicero, Illinois, in 1951, and the bombing of a Negro family's house in Los Angeles in March, 1952, highlighted this continuous persecution of the Negro people in their search for more adequate and decent dwellings. Negroes are often forced to live in old, dilapidated houses that have been deserted by white tenants. Yet for these poorer dwellings, they are often charged higher rents than white people pay for better housing.

Stuyvesant Town, an extensive housing project on the east side of Manhattan, New York City, was built during World War II by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. From the beginning, this richest insurance corporation announced its Jim Crow policy of "no Negro tenants" and refused to reconsider the issue. City Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., introduced a bill in the City Council in 1944 to outlaw all such discrimination in Stuyvesant Town and in all tax-supported housing developments.

A group of white tenants organized the Town and Village Committee to End Discrimination in Stuyvesant Town and pressed to have Negro families included in the project. Ten of the white families included union members. One white teacher, Lee Lorch, rented his apartment to a Negro family, Mr. and Mrs. Hardine Hendrix and their small son, to occupy for some months while he was out of the city.

Metropolitan Life threatened the white families who opposed discrimination and refused to renew their leases. It obtained eviction orders. The U.S. Supreme Court, the City Council, and the mayor, all refused to intervene against the company. But in the face of these

threats, the white families stood their ground, refused to live with Jim Crow, and gained support from many trade unions and other groups in the city.

For three days before January 17, 1952, when the evictions were to be carried out, a continuous picket line surrounded the Stuyvesant Town buildings. This tremendous public pressure forced Metropolitan Life first to postpone the evictions and then to cancel them entirely. Three Negro families, including the Hendrixes, remained as tenants in the project.

Chairman Paul Ross of the tenants committee commented on the victory: "What has been accomplished must be credited to the vigorous support of the many thousands of citizens, Negro and white, of all political views and religious faiths, and the many civic organizations, ministerial associations, veterans' groups and trade unions without whose active aid these democratic principles might not have been sustained in this precedent-setting situation."

In Trade Unions

The labor movement in this country is still run by men, despite the fact that women form a sizable proportion of the membership in many unions. Including AFL, CIO, and independent unions, about 3,000,000 women now belong to labor organizations.

About one in five (21 percent) of the 14 million organized workers in the United States, then, are women. But less than one in six (16 percent) of the 18,300,000 women at work in the spring of 1952 were organized in trade unions.

At the close of World War II, women membership in unions was at an all-time peak of about 3,500,000. Women had come into industry in greater numbers than in any previous period, and the unions were strong enough to organize them more effectively.

Unions having the largest woman membership at the end of 1945 included the following: Electrical, Radio & Machine (then CIO), 280,000; Automobile (CIO), 275,000; Ladies' Garment (AFL), 250,000; Men's Clothing (CIO), 200,000; Textile (CIO), 175,000; Telephone (independent), 150,000; Steel (CIO), 75,000; Railway Clerks

(AFL), 75,000; Retail & Wholesale (CIO), 75,000; Textile (AFL), 50,000; Bakery & Confectionery (AFL), 50,000. These were the estimates of the U.S. Women's Bureau on the basis of union reports.

But in the following postwar years, divisions in labor's ranks resulted in a decline in union membership and therefore also some decline in the number of women members. After the CIO had expelled eleven progressive unions, its total membership fell from about 6,000,000 to only 3,400,000 dues-paying members in October, 1950. This figure was reported by the CIO in its financial statement filed with the Department of Labor under the Taft-Hartley Act.

But despite the decline in total union membership, some 3,000,000 women are still union members, entitled to adequate representation in the local, state, and national organizations. It would be naturally assumed that many women, especially in unions with the largest woman membership, would be delegates at the national conventions of AFL, CIO, and independent unions. Yet everyone who has attended any recent convention of the national labor bodies knows that very few women are visible as delegates on the floor.

At the 1951 CIO convention, among 539 delegates representing 35 national and international unions, only six were women. In the Amalgamated Clothing Workers at least half the members are women, but among its 13 delegates at the convention only two were women. Among the 13 delegates from the Communications Workers of America, only one was a woman, although it was reported that 65 percent of the members of that union are women.[61] Of seven delegates from the United Shoe Workers one was a woman. Two women and one man represented the small Barbers & Beauty Culturists of America. Only 10 women could be counted among the 277 delegates from industrial union councils. Thus out of a total of 816 delegates, only 16 or less than 2 percent were women.

The Automobile Workers (CIO), which boasts of its good policy in relation to women workers, had not even one woman among its 23 delegates. Not even one woman was among the 13 delegates of the International Union of Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers (CIO), in an industry where many women are employed.

The AFL's record in relation to women is no better than the CIO's. At the 1951 convention there were in all 599 delegates, representing

95 national and international unions and over 200 organized groups, including state branches, central bodies, local trade and federal labor unions. Among these 599 delegates, only 12 (or 2 percent) were women.

These 12 included six women delegates from national and international unions: two from the United Garment Workers; and one each from the Ladies' Garment Workers; Government Employees; Hat, Cap & Millinery Workers; and the American Federation of Teachers. Not even one woman represented the United Textile Workers in an industry where nearly half the workers are women.

Typical of the official AFL attitude toward women is a recent article called "Enlist the Ladies" by James L. McDevitt, director of Labor's League for Political Education, in the *American Federationist.* The author admits that "Too often there is a tendency in some of our unions not to think of women as part of our political team." But in an election year, he says, the wives, sisters, and daughters of AFL members become important because they can vote: "Not only as voters but as vote-getters there is nobody who can do the job like the housewife."[62]

Instead of conducting a campaign to organize 15 million unorganized women workers, the AFL talks of women only as auxiliary to the men, as housewives, the "ladies" to be enlisted in a year of national political elections. But at least it does recognize that more than half the population are women and that they must be reckoned with as a political force.

In earlier years the AFL endorsed the efforts of the National Women's Trade Union League to organize and bring together women trade union members. Organized in 1903, this national body was a federation of trade unions with an individual membership of those accepting its platform. It had an honorable record in the strikes of 1909-10 against sweatshop conditions in the garment trades. Its program in the years following World War I included: organization of all workers into trade unions; equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex or race; full citizenship for women; the outlawry of war; and closer affiliation of women workers of all countries.

In 1950, however, this organization went out of business with the statement that its job was finished. The New York Women's Trade

Union League continues in the field and brings together women of CIO as well as AFL unions. Its 1952 program includes work for an equal pay provision in the New York State labor law, an amendment to the disability benefits law to provide maternity benefits, provision for child care centers to aid working mothers, and improvements in the social security and unemployment insurance laws.

On the local level, several AFL, CIO, and independent unions do have women in positions of leadership. *Justice,* organ of the Ladies' Garment Workers (AFL), carries pictures showing women as officers and executive board members of locals in different areas, as does also *The Advance,* publication of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (CIO).

The International Association of Machinists (independent) ran a series of articles in 1951 in its weekly publication, *The Machinist,* on women in unions, saying it had 376 women as officers in local and district lodges and many more as shop committee representatives and shop stewards.

The United Automobile Workers (CIO), recognized the importance of its women members in a popular pamphlet called "The Contract Succeeded Where Love Failed." It speaks of "unions like the UAW-CIO, which are completely committed to removing the discriminations against women (and all minorities)." While pressing for national and state equal pay laws, the UAW says:

"An equal pay for equal work clause in the contract, along with an equal seniority and opportunity provision for everyone, are far more effective in practice than a law. . . . Laws are important, nevertheless, even when you have contract clauses, because they protect women who are not in unions."

The UAW describes its pamphlet as "an insight into the inside of the problems of working women," and declares that "the union was organized in the first place to combat injustice, against women as well as men." But in practice this union is no better than the other unions. It will be interesting to see whether the UAW elects a woman delegate to the next CIO convention.

Most significant and effective are the conferences held by some independent unions to discuss the problems of working women. Several such conferences have been held by the United Electrical Work-

ers, among them one by District 11 in Chicago in January, 1952, and one by District 6 in Pittsburgh in March of that year, as part of the work of the UE Fair Practices Committee.

At the Chicago conference of UE it was reported that International Harvester Company at West Pullman, Illinois, discriminates especially against Negro workers. In the 50 departments of this plant, women are barred from 25 and there are no Negroes in 11. The conference revealed the special forms of discrimination against Negro women, singled out by management in attempting to create division in the union ranks by color and sex. Delegates made earnest appeals for union action to force companies to hire Negro women.

At these conferences the workers discussed the different points in UE's program for women, which includes the following:

Regrade all jobs done by women up from common labor rate, under a single rate structure, to eliminate discrimination as compared to jobs done by men.

Post all job opportunities for upgrading according to seniority, regardless of race or sex, providing adequate training for women to qualify for new job openings.

Make the company provide adequate health and safety safeguards for all workers.

Eliminate double seniority lists for men and women wherever they exist.

Give special attention to problems of married women growing out of family responsibility, such as shifts and absenteeism.

Eliminate discriminatory hiring practices against married women, Negro women, etc., where they exist.

Campaign for government-financed child care centers for working mothers, such as were provided in World War II.

Press the fight against speedup which is causing accidents and ill-health among women workers.

Guarantee the life and militancy of the union by developing, training, and electing women to all levels of leadership.

See that Fair Practices Committees are functioning in every shop.[63]

These conferences indicate that the UE is really grappling with the

concrete problems of women workers. It fights against double standards in the shops for men and women—double rate sheets, double job classifications, double seniority lists—with women always on the short end. This union takes the lead in the long struggle for equal pay and equal opportunity.

Recently women in other unions have expressed in vigorous words their resentment at wage discrimination and lack of recognition in union activities. At the 1952 convention of the United Packinghouse Workers (CIO) two men delegates spoke in favor of a resolution to the effect that wage diffifferentials between men and women be eliminated in all future contracts. Then a Negro woman delegate, Symantha Washington, of Local 347 in Chicago took the floor and said:

"For much too long, in all the plants, this has been a fluffed off question. Men take this question lightly, but it is not a light question. Women are fighters. In the Chicago strike women pickets outnumbered the men three to one. We women are tired of talk from male leaders."

Another Negro union member, Hattie Prather, of Local 56 in Chicago, said: "If we could hold down men's jobs in wartime, we can now. And we should get paid for it. We go into negotiations with the company, and there are no women on the negotiating committee, and we don't know what's going on. We want women in there on the negotiations."

Rose Clifton, of Local 28 in Chicago, reported: "There's been some progress made. In some districts women have been advanced to certain jobs of leadership. But a strange thing—when they think of advancing women they never think in terms of Negro women."[84]

A woman worker at General Motors' AC Spark Plug division in Flint, Michigan, writes on the subject under the title, "Listen Here, Union Brothers!" describing the plant which employs about 10,000 shop workers, most of whom are women: "Men and women are in separate classifications and have separate seniority lists. . . . Layoffs at AC are hitting at women especially, since we have separate seniority lists. A woman with six years or even higher seniority can be laid off, while men with four months continue to work."

On the union leadership this Flint woman worker writes that it is almost entirely composed of men and is lily-white: "Though there

are a handful of committeewomen, the overwhelming majority of committee reps [representatives] are male, and, to my knowledge, all white."

Then she explains the reasons why women have not done more about this situation which they do resent: "Because of years of company intimidation, because jobs are scarce, and mainly because of the division the company has been able to create between men and women, it has been difficult for women to tackle these questions. It is also twice as difficult for a working woman to become active in the union as for a man, because she has the responsibility of the home when she leaves the shop."

In her appeal to union brothers, this automobile worker concludes: "The myth that women are not militant will be shattered once the women organize together with the men around their specific problems and demands."[65]

Auxiliaries Bring Women Together

In the women's auxiliaries of both AFL and CIO, working women have expressed their support of trade unions but only on an "auxiliary" basis. Over two million women belong in the auxiliaries affiliated with the American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries of Labor, bringing together the wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters of AFL members. This is an important body of organized women, but too often its activities are narrowed down to the promotion of "union label" goods. In fact, the annual report of the Women's Auxiliaries at each AFL convention is made under the sponsorship of the Union Label Trades Department, as if the women were not capable of standing on their own feet. At the 1951 convention it was again pointed out that "it was at a convention of the Union Label Trades Department in 1936 that the first resolution was introduced to form a national federation of women's auxiliaries."[66]

The Congress of Women's Auxiliaries of the CIO held its tenth annual convention at the time of the CIO's 1951 convention. The "good ladies" were congratulated by CIO Secretary James B. Carey for having incorporated redbaiting provisions into the organization's by-

laws. The ladies had the temerity, however, to "assert their rights to equal treatment as citizens and as the family partners of our members." They pointed out that "they are in some instances excluded from the participation which they desire in carrying out CIO policies and programs."[67] Carey turned off their complaint with a laugh.

The Railroad Brotherhoods all have women's auxiliaries, sometimes called the Ladies' Auxiliary, as in the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, and sometimes called the Ladies' Society, as in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen. As in the AFL and the CIO, these auxiliaries bring together the women of the union members' families. They are the clubs of thousands of women who may have no other way of getting together. Every big union carries in each issue of its official journal at least a column from its women's auxiliary.

While some national union officers may try to ridicule the "good ladies," rank-and-file unionists and their families recognize the importance of these societies as a center for efforts "to strengthen the cause of all who have a common interest in those who toil."[68]

In Recent Labor Struggles

For 130 years in innumerable strikes for higher pay and better conditions, women workers have shown their courage and spirit on the picket lines at plant gates. They have defied police clubs and tear gas, militiamen's guns, strikebreakers' fists and attacks by company thugs. They have been arrested and jailed, but they have come back again on the picket line to continue the struggle.

The year 1823 "witnessed in New York the first 'all women' strike in American history when the women tailors organized and struck for higher wages."[69] In 1824 the "female weavers" walked out with the men of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, cotton mills in a strike against a wage cut and against a lengthening of work hours. From then on, down to the present day, women have joined the men workers in struggles for greater freedom and a higher standard of living.[70]

Labor struggles of recent years have shown that women have an unconquerable will to stick it out even in the face of violent attacks by

company police. In Pittsburgh, for example, in the winter of 1950-51, the clerks walked out, to a member, in a strike against leading department stores. For most of them it was their first experience on a picket line. One woman picket told of the chill and the wind and the rain and the bitter comments of some passers-by.

In the strike of 31,000 Western Union workers in 822 cities in the spring of 1952, a majority of the pickets were women. These members of the Commercial Telegraphers Union (AFL) walked out when the company refused to enter into any collective bargaining for cost-of-living wage increases sought by the union.

Union campaigns to organize the southern textile mills in the years since World War II have been met by the companies with attacks on the picket lines, kidnapping of women organizers, and other forms of violence.

In the 1950 strike at American Enka Corporation at Morristown, Tennessee, the National Guard highway patrol and sheriff's deputies were called out to overawe the strikers. Women workers did not escape the arrests and violent attacks on union members in this strike. "Mary Hatmaker, who worked at the union commissary which was several miles from the picket line," was seized by four state highway patrolmen, accompanied by 28 National Guard men and a sheriff.[71]

The Textile Workers Union (CIO) sent Mrs. Edna Martin to Tallapoosa, Georgia, in 1947 when the workers at the American Thread Company requested an organizer. Upon arrival at Tallapoosa, Mrs. Martin "made arrangements to live at a rooming house and then made calls on a number of employees. During her activities she was kept under constant surveillance by the company policemen" and the company superintendent.

"That night her room was invaded by a mob of armed men and women. She was bound, forcibly loaded into a truck, driven out of town, and finally ejected on a lonely country road with the instruction, 'Don't come back to Tallapoosa or you will be shot on sight.'" Mrs. Martin later identified several of her abductors as employees of the company.

Over 900 members of the Textile Workers Union (CIO) at Salisbury, North Carolina, were on strike in the spring of 1952 against the North Carolina Finishing Company. A majority of the strikers

were women who kept the plant effectively shut down by mass picketing day after day. For the first time in nine years the company had refused to renew its contract with the union. Strike meetings were held twice a week in the union hall and the morale of the strikers was reported as high.[72]

In the 1952 campaign to unionize workers at the Livingston Shirt Company at Livingston, Tennessee, an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (CIO), Mrs. Daisy Pennington, was beaten in July, 1952, by relatives of a guard at the plant. The union charged that the plant owner witnessed the attack and made no effort to stop it. The beating took place after the regional National Labor Relations Board set aside an election at the plant because the union had not been given equal opportunity to present its case to the 700 workers employed by the shirt factory.[73]

At the big Akron, Ohio, plants of B. F. Goodrich Company and Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company in March, 1952, white collar workers, members of the United Rubber Workers (CIO), Local 5, were on strike for a contract to provide the benefits already granted the production workers. About 90 percent of these strikers were women, and many hundreds of them were either under 20 years of age or in their early 20's, the union reported. Production workers supported the strike, and at one time the walkouts involved over 30,000 workers, closing down the two plants. Picket lines were so effective that the Goodrich Company obtained a court injunction to limit the number of pickets.[74]

During the strike at International Harvester Company at Chicago and other midwestern plants in August, 1952, Negro and white women together helped stage a "sit-down" in the plant in support of the union's demands for a wage increase of 15 cents an hour and a union shop. Police took many of the women by force and herded them into patrol wagons in an effort to break the strike.

In the long strike of miners at the New Jersey (Empire) Zinc Company at Bayard, New Mexico, beginning in 1950 and ending in January, 1952, the Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers (independent) won a smashing victory, largely because women took over picketing and other strike duties. The miners were banned by injunctions from picketing or any other strike activity. Their wives and mothers took

their places. For 15 months the company tried to operate with strike-breakers who, with guns pointed at the pickets, were driven through the lines into the plant.

The story of this strike is one of hideous violence by company-paid gunmen, the forces of so-called "law and order" in the county and state, and by vigilante outfits. Scores of women and even children were arrested and thrust into the county jail because they had manned the picket line. Many women were injured when the scabs' cars, escorted by armed sheriff's deputies, crashed the lines.

Empire Zinc Company, with 1950 profits of over $10 million, had the reputation of being one of the meanest companies in New Mexico. When the men pickets were arrested and imprisoned in June, 1951, an all-woman picket line was set up to replace the men. As fast as the sheriffs arrested the women, other women and children came down the hill from the mining camp to take their places on the line.

When the jails were filled, the women pickets were locked up in hotels. Tear-gas bombs were thrown at the picket lines, but when the gas cleared away, the women were still there. At one time, about 120 were arrested, including even young children and babies. Some 17 hours later they were released, but only after they had staged a sit-down strike in behalf of their rights. On the picket lines scabs tried to provoke the women so they could be arrested for "assault and battery."

August 23, 1951, became known to the miners as "the bloody 23rd," when the sheriff ordered his deputies to "drive through if you have to kill every woman." Scabs and deputies were all armed with pistols and tear gas. While the sheriff watched, two cars drove into the line of women and children. Two women were knocked down. Rachael Juarez, 14 years old, was thrown to the side of the road, her arm dislocated and badly bruised. As she lay there, a gunman ran up and shot tear gas directly into her eyes. But when she recovered, she went back on picket line duty every day until school opened.

In January, 1952, the New Jersey Zinc miners returned to work with a contract granting them portal-to-portal pay, wage increases averaging 24 cents an hour, and other benefits. With their history-

making courage, the women were largely responsible for winning this strike and the substantial gains that followed it.

In Progressive Organizations

Working class women are organized not only in trade unions but also in fraternal associations totaling many millions of members. Some of these organizations are not forward-looking in general policy but nevertheless include some members who are progressive.

Many Negro women, for example, belong not only to the groups described above but also to such organizations as the Order of the Eastern Star (Masonic), the women's division of the Elks, the segregated Negro division of the Young Women's Christian Association, and the National Council of Negro Women which brings together 22 national agencies and 850,000 individual members.

Jewish women are strongly organized in religious, political or other groups. Of the 4,500,000 persons in Jewish congregations, about half are women. The National Council of Jewish Women was organized in 1893 at the Chicago World's Fair. By 1951, it had some 94,000 members, grouped in 235 sections, including senior, junior, and councilette divisions, and 10 regional conferences. It describes its purpose and activities as concerned with service to the foreign-born, international understanding for peace, contemporary Jewish affairs, social legislation, and overseas service. In welfare activities, the Council functions through establishment of neighborhood houses, nursery schools, summer camps, and work with the aged and handicapped, and by serving the varied needs of the foreign-born.

The Emma Lazarus Federation of Jewish Women's Clubs, a progressive organization, has over 4,000 members organized in more than 100 clubs in all parts of the United States. Started in 1944, the Emma Lazarus clubs expressed the growing Jewish consciousness that developed during World War II. June Gordon, national president, describes its purpose: "To reach and give leadership to the vast number of Jewish women in the communities, to activize them around a well-planned program aimed at solving those problems which strike women with particular force."

As part of its relief and rehabilitation work in 1945-46 the Emma

Lazarus Federation purchased a mansion, renamed the "Enchanted Castle," in Andrecy, France, to house 125 children of Jewish displaced persons. In the United States, with the slogan "Politics is a bread and butter concern," the Federation has led such struggles as consumer campaigns against the high cost of living and against increase in gas and electric rates.

The organization has carried on a consistent fight against anti-Semitism wherever this un-American attitude has appeared. On International Woman's Day, March 8, and on Mother's Day in May, the Federation emphasizes the contribution that Negro and Jewish culture have made in the life of this country and of the world. Its clubs have become important centers for constructive, forward-looking social action by Jewish women.

Most of the national groups in this country are well organized. But some of these organizations are dominated by a reactionary leadership which directs the members away from any progressive action. Most of the national groups publish journals in their own tongue. These papers are all influential among foreign-born groups—some of them toward a conservative policy, others toward progressive thinking and action.

The Hungarian women's paper, *Woman World,* the only Hungarian-American women's magazine in America, is an example of a progressive paper. Started as a bulletin in 1934, it has expanded in recent years into a 24-page monthly, presenting current issues in an interesting way, with short articles and illustrations. It is popular among the women of Hungarian heritage, especially in mining and steel industrial communities. Some of the material in this woman's magazine is reprinted in the Hungarian *Daily Journal,* a progressive newspaper which has celebrated 50 years of publication.

A recent issue of *Woman World,* for example, includes a tribute to Carol King, the woman attorney who died early in 1952. For many years she had defended the rights of foreign-born workers, especially victims of the deportation drive that followed passage of the McCarran Act in Congress. Deportation provisions of this so-called Internal Security Act of 1950 menace the liberties of some 14 million foreign-born Americans.

The Hungarian women's organization is active in opposition to

these unjust deportations. Its cultural committee has carried on struggles for basic civil rights in this country as well as aid to the foreign-born. Similar activities are carried on by the Polish, Finnish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Croatian, and Slovak national groups.

These national groups, now rooted in the basic industries of the country, play a more and more important role in American life. Thousands of steel workers in the Pittsburgh area are Croatians and Slovaks. Many of the automobile workers and their families in Michigan are of Polish descent. Much of the coal mined in Pennsylvania is dug by workers of Ukrainian descent. But when these groups fight for civil rights and aid to the foreign-born, they are constantly met by propaganda from reactionary groups, designed to influence the national groups in this country and their countrymen in Europe and Asia.

In the progressive movement calling for the peaceful coexistence of capitalist and socialist nations, women are an important factor. The women's division of the National Council for American-Soviet Friendship, led by the late Muriel Draper, has played a significant part in such action looking toward world peace. American women, both Negro and white unionists and others, have visited the Soviet Union to see for themselves the life in a country that is building socialism.

From the beginning women have taken a prominent part in the Progressive Party. Members of this party include representatives from labor, farm, Negro, church, youth, peace, community, and cooperative groups. In the 1952 elections the party's program for peace made a strong appeal to the women of America—the mothers, wives, and sisters of those who are drafted to fight in unjust wars.

This peace program demands an end to the war in Korea, big-power talks to settle outstanding issues, lower taxes on the great majority of the people. In place of the present vast expenditures for the implements of war, the Progressive Party calls for more schools, hospitals, houses, and flood control, with peacetime full employment. It demands full citizenship for the Negro people and all other minorities, and a living Bill of Rights for all the people.

Mrs. Charlotta Bass, the Negro woman candidate of the Progressive Party for vice-president of the United States, has been a newspaper woman for more than 40 years. In 1912 she became publisher of the *California Eagle,* which she edited with her husband, the late Joseph

Blackburn Bass, a co-founder of the Topeka (Kansas) *Plaindealer*. She published the *Eagle* until 1951.

As a Republican in California, she fought for Negro employment in the General Hospital in Los Angeles and for the integration of Negroes in the California Telephone Company. She fought and won the fight against segregation in the Los Angeles schools and swimming pools, fought restrictive covenants, and took up the cudgels for the Mexican-Americans who were brutally treated by the police. She was the first Negro to serve on a county grand jury in California, and for 20 years was a member of the executive board of the Los Angeles branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Mrs. Bass left the Republican Party in 1940 when she discovered that it had upstairs headquarters for whites and downstairs headquarters for Negroes. She says of herself: "I was somewhat bewildered until 1948 when the news flashed across the country that a new party was to be born. Then I felt at last the millenium had come. I immediately became a member of the Progressive Party."

Another woman, speaking with Mrs. Bass for the Progressive Party in 1952, was Mrs. Vincent Hallinan, wife of the party's candidate for president of the United States. While Vincent Hallinan, a lawyer, was serving a three-month sentence for "contempt of court" in his defense of President Harry Bridges of the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union, Vivian Hallinan presented the program of this peace party in a nation-wide tour. Thus, during the early months of the election campaign, the Progressive Party was represented by two women speakers.

Thelma Dale, former associate director of the Progressive Party in Philadelphia, was appointed in April, 1952, as assistant campaign manager for the national Progressive Party. She has led outstanding and successful struggles for Negro representation in trade unions and in political organizations.

Mobilizing Women for War

Some 163,000 young women were in the armed forces of the United States at the close of World War II, nearly 100,000 of them

as enlisted personnel and about 63,000 as Army nurses or as officers of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) or the Women's Medical Specialist Corps. The latter includes dietitians, physical therapists, and occupational specialists. These women played their part in the war to defeat fascism.

In 1951 about 18,000 women were listed as in the armed forces, either as enlisted personnel or Army nurses or on special jobs. But the U.S. Department of Defense did not consider this number "adequate" for the program of war preparations mapped out by the Truman Administration. So in October, 1951, the department announced that it wanted about 72,500 volunteers to bring the number of women in uniform up to 112,000 by June 30, 1952. This increase would represent a program to militarize women in what is officially still "peacetime."

In the drive for women volunteers every possible advertising device was used. In the New York area early in May, 1952, high school girls about to graduate were invited to the U.S. Army headquarters on Governor's Island and entertained at government (taxpayers') expense.

This historic island has been an Army base for over 150 years. Its picturesque old fort and the present-day GI's were shown to the possible recruits in an effort to present the glamorous side of Army life. The girls had their pictures in all the newspapers, too. The next day their mothers were invited to come out to the island and see for themselves how pleasant Army life would be for their daughters.

This campaign is part of a war program which may end in the draft of young women for service in the armed forces. "It can now be told," says an AP dispatch "that Army planners in World War II agreed to recommend that Congress authorize the draft of 500,000 women annually into the military services."[75]

Already a leading nation-wide women's organization, the National Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs, representing some 160,000 women, is considering a recommendation to make unmarried women between the ages of 18 and 26 liable for training and military service. The Federation's board of directors has approved such an amendment to the Selective Service Act. But many members of the Business & Professional Women's Clubs are over 26 and would

not themselves be liable for such a draft.

In support of the drive to recruit women it is estimated that women can do about 400 of the 600 types of jobs in the Army alone. The list of 400 does not include jobs involving combat, considerable physical strength, "improper environment," too long a training period, or supervision over men.

But even glamorized advertising could not bring many women as volunteers for the armed forces. By June 1, 1952, the total recruitment was about 12,500—or less than one-fifth of the goal. Three months later it was again reported that the drive to recruit women was "falling short." The desire for peace in the world is deep and strong, especially among women and girls.

Action for World Peace

The Gallup poll announced in December, 1951, that 70 percent of the American people favored a peace meeting between the heads of the three greatest powers. But after a speaking trip across the continent in the winter of 1951-52, Halois Moorhead, the distinguished Negro woman who is executive secretary of American Women for Peace, reported that "If a real poll were taken, it would far exceed the 70 percent figure."

Mrs. Moorhead found a marked increase in peace sentiment among women in the many cities and towns she visited. There are peace groups of women now in about 100 cities, usually called "Women for Peace." The women are reacting, she said, to "the mounting casualty lists of American GI's, the soaring living costs and the shrinking dollar values and, most frequently, the effects of war tensions on the children of our nation."

Protests against the intervention of the United States in Korea have been nation-wide. Some mothers and fathers have returned the U.S. Army medals awarded to their sons killed in the Korean war. Women played a leading part in the nation-wide poll on the subject of peace in Korea, conducted in the autumn of 1952 by the American Peace Crusade.

In Los Angeles, women took an active part in a successful Southern

California Peace Conference. There, as in other places, the connection was made clear between speaking out boldly for peace and defending civil rights—now attacked under the Smith Act and the McCarran Act.

One delegate pointed out: "The great danger in America is that free speech may pass away. Thus the best protection for free speech is to exercise it."

The Chicago Women for Peace, founded in 1951, was able to report a year later at an all-day workshop: "We are firmly entrenched in Negro-white unity, confident that the women of our city will swell our ranks behind the slogan, 'Peace is the only victory.'"

In Boston, the Minute Women for Peace have been notably successful in collecting signatures for peace in Korea and for peace-pact talks among the Big Five powers—the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, and New China. They find that despite the war hysteria most persons are willing to sign for peace. This group uses stickers with the legend, "This family has signed up for peace." Like many groups in other centers, the Minute Women for Peace have arranged to have the moving picture, *Peace Will Win,* shown in many towns in Massachusetts.

The New Jersey Women's Council for Peace has carried on similar activities. A recent leaflet put out by this group called for peace in Korea; children in schools, not in uniforms; appropriations for housing, not for arms; lower taxes and prices, not war profiteers; full rights, not terror for the Negro people—all in a world of peace and plenty.

One unique method of working for world peace was described in a recent issue of *The Peacemaker,* monthly bulletin of the American Women for Peace. A church woman in the Middle West wrote:

"The idea of reviving Sam Adams' Committees of Correspondence is a valuable one. . . . I already have enough evidence to convince me it has great possibilities for building the peace movement. When we have enough enthusiasm, enough women to carry out even one specific project such as a thousand letters to one radio commentator and his sponsor declaring that until his particular brand of war propaganda is toned down the sponsor's brand of soap will not be used, I feel confident that the current attitude of inevitability of war would be

quickly replaced by an attitude of the possibility of peace. By the correspondence method and the Open Letter to Methodist ministers I have reached hundreds in small towns who could not have been reached in any other way."

The Peacemaker carries suggestions from the experience of many groups on practical methods of work. These include protests against the A-bomb drills and dog tags on the children, suggestions of baby-carriage parades and motor-car parades with peace signs, and many letters of protest against "Operation Killer" in Korea and elsewhere. Some of the new groups described are affiliated with the national American Women for Peace, while others are independent local organizations.

The American Women for Peace was set up on August 8, 1950, as the result of a peace delegation to Washington. Some 1,000 women, including both Negro and white, from 40 states and 80 organizations, took part in this pilgrimage. Two months later in October, 1950, the AWP led a startling mass delegation of a thousand women to the United Nations to urge representatives of the various nations to mediate the Korean war and all causes of international tension. Prevented by guards from visiting the delegations to keep definite appointments they had made, they held their demonstration on the grounds. Speaker after speaker was lifted on an overturned ash can from which they spoke or led the women in prayer and the singing of "America." AWP chairman, Dr. Clementina Paolone, was spokesman for this demonstration for peace. A month later they came back to the UN—this time 2,500 strong—and they were admitted.

During the following months mothers went to Washington to protest the drafting of 18-year-old boys and German rearmament. On Mother's Day they got signatures on peace petitions. At the American People's Congress and Exposition for Peace in Chicago in the summer of 1951, more than half of the 5,000 delegates were women, coming from all parts of the country to exchange experiences. At this conference Miss Beulah Richardson first read her dramatic poem, "A Negro Woman Speaks of White Womanhood, of White Supremacy, of Peace."

Women workers were also active in the American Peace Crusade which launched a nation-wide campaign in February, 1951, for peti-

tions to Congressmen urging that Washington should initiate negotiations for world peace. Included in the petition was the following statement: "We urge you to use your influence in Congress for a meeting of the heads of the major powers of the world—the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and the People's Republic of China—to work out disarmament and a peace agreement to remove world tensions."

Similar petitions have been issued by the Chicago Labor Conference for Peace, the Connecticut Labor Peace Committee, and other organizations, some of them affiliated with the American Peace Crusade and other autonomous local groups. In all of these activities, women have been in the forefront.

Nearly 1,000 women and children on June 25, 1952, carried their demands for peace to the United Nations. The delegation was sponsored by the American Women for Peace, the Bronx Women's Peace Council, and the Queens Women for Peace. A statement was left at the UN urging Secretary Trygve Lie to use his power in initiating a conference among the five major powers for an all-time peace agreement "to secure the lives of our children and all humanity." The delegation also left an appeal to Warren Austin, chief U.S. delegate, urging a cease-fire in Korea.

In the older and larger women's organizations peace sentiment has been openly expressed in opposition to the government's program of war preparations and vast expenditures for military purposes. At the 1951 convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, for example, there was vigorous opposition to universal military training as proposed in Congress. This federation reports a membership of some 11 million women.

Largely because of the opposition expressed by the women of the nation, UMT was defeated in March, 1952, in the House of Representatives. The bill was indefinitely shelved as a measure too unpopular for an election year. Every major labor, farm, church and educational group in the United States came out against permanent, compulsory UMT. AFL, CIO and independent unions were all strongly opposed to such a measure.

In the 30 years of its existence, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has rallied many hundreds of women in this

country for the cause of world peace and against the development of atomic weapons. The Society of Friends (Quakers), with many women members, has issued studies looking toward peaceful coexistence between capitalist and socialist nations. Women in the Young Women's Christian Association and in many church groups have joined in action for peace.

In other countries women have been pointing the way to world peace ever since the end of World War II. The story of how the women of the world fight for peace has been movingly told by Betty Millard in a recent pamphlet, *Women on Guard.* This American woman spent two years abroad as a member of the secretariat of the Women's International Democratic Federation. Her work took her to France, Italy, the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, China, Finland, Denmark, Switzerland, and Germany.

In *Women on Guard* she shows how it was possible that by April, 1952, some 602,570,000 persons throughout the world had signed their names to petitions urging big-power peace talks.

In the Soviet Union alone, a total of 96,729,946 Soviet citizens signed a petition calling for the abolition of the atom bomb and for a peace pact between the Big Five—the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Great Britain and France. If any person in the Soviet Union urged the government to drop a bomb on America, he would be punished as a criminal under a decree which reads in part:

"The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, guided by the lofty principles of the Soviet policy of peace, which pursues the aims of consolidating peace and friendly relations among nations, decrees:

"1. That propaganda for war, regardless of the form in which it is carried out, undermines the cause of peace, creates the danger of a new war, and constitutes the gravest crime against humanity.

"2. That persons guilty of propaganda for war shall be brought to trial and tried as heinous criminals."

So also in other people's democracies in Eastern Europe there are similar laws for the protection of peace. The Czechoslovak Parliament, for example, in December, 1950, passed a law which reads in part:

"Whoever shall attempt to violate the peaceful cooperation of peoples by instigating a new war by any means whatsoever, whoever

propagates war or supports war propaganda by other means, commits a criminal offense against peace.

"Offenders shall be punished by imprisonment of one to ten years."

These republics and other countries all over the world have been represented at the great peace conferences that have been held in recent years. At the Asian and Pacific Peace Conference, held in Peking, China, in October, 1952, delegates from the United States and other countries united in an "Appeal to the Peoples of the World" for the defense of peace throughout the world. Delegates from the United States recognized their solemn obligation to "lead their country along the path of peace."

In this country the women's peace movement is still small. There is at present a great gap between the peace sentiment of the people and the degree of its organization. But the movement grows significantly among the women in working class neighborhoods, in trade unions, and in churches, block associations, and fraternal societies. It is part of the vast movement for friendship among the working people of the world and for peaceful coexistence of nations. It expresses today what Abraham Lincoln said in 1864 to a committee from the New York Workingmen's Democratic-Republican Association:

"The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations, and tongues, and kindreds."

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